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*Reading Maketh A Full Man*

—SIR FRANCIS BACON

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# A History of London

BY

GORDON HOME

Author of *Roman Britain; Roman London;*  
*Mediæval London*

NEW YORK

JONATHAN CAPE & HARRISON SMITH

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A HISTORY  
OF LONDON



# I

## THE EARLIEST KNOWLEDGE OF LONDON

It is impossible at present to state at what period the twin hills of ancient London were first inhabited, nor has anyone yet produced evidence for stating which of the two hills divided by the Walbrook was first occupied. The desire to fix a date for the foundation of the great capital of a vast empire is naturally strong. One hungers to know why and when the first settlers chose that particular ground on the north bank of the Thames; archæologists examine and re-examine the evidence; their deductions are argued and opposing views are taken, but the questions remain to a great extent unanswered.

The circumstances controlling the problem can be stated briefly as follows: When a non-mountainous country is in its primitive and untamed condition its rivers are its roads. Thus the Thames in prehistoric times became the most important highway of the lowlands of Britain, and on its

easily navigated surface the early inhabitants penetrated the country long before tracks had begun to make anything but the firm and dry downlands freely accessible. This great ready-made means of communication faced the mainland of Europe, whence came invading foreigners and also traders. Even the simplest forms of commerce require a rendezvous and a safe place for landing the goods which cannot immediately be disposed of by barter or more complicated methods.

At a point on the Thames where the tide had to a great extent spent its force, and where the waterway changed its character from an estuary to that of a river, there were two fairly extensive gravelly hills on the north bank. A creek divided them and another lay at the foot of the more westerly plateau. There was thus in this place a very definite invitation to the local tribes to meet where two exceedingly convenient harbours provided safe anchorage or mooring for the frailest craft, and where, on spacious areas of dry land adjoining, buying, selling, or bartering could be transacted under the best conditions possible. This place came to be called by a name which first appears in the Romanised form of Londinium, from which comes the modern name London. There seems little doubt that the Romans found a trading settlement on the spot, for the name



is Celtic; but while there are sound reasons for thinking it probable that the first beginnings of a port were in times quite remote from the Roman conquest, yet such archæological evidence as exists lends little support to the existence of a pre-Roman occupation of the site. It may be that nearly all traces of the Celtic settlement were destroyed in Roman times. The foundations of the average buildings would go right through the shallow accumulations of the earlier inhabitants, and on this account, together with the fact that the name is Celtic, the scarcity of pottery which can be dated earlier than the first century A.D. does not appear to give one quite sufficient ground for denying the existence of London in pre-Roman times.

A few stone implements of the palæolithic age and two or three others of the later or neolithic period have been discovered in the City area and are in the Guildhall Museum, together with various objects of the Bronze Age. These indicate that the site was not unknown to the earliest inhabitants of Britain. Of the late Celtic period a number of objects have been brought to light within the boundaries of the Roman city, but for a very large proportion of these there is insufficient information concerning the circumstances and position of their discovery, and the majority

cannot be dated with sufficient precision to make them valuable documents with which to aid in building up the early history of London.

It is true that Cæsar does not mention London, but he omits to name any place in Britain although he was for some time in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, which then bore a British name. Dio Cassius is equally indifferent to the nomenclature of towns in the island. It need not therefore be supposed that none existed. There is, in addition, the fact that the site of London was at a point where the areas occupied by four of the most important tribes of Southern Britain appear to have met. This circumstance must have been extremely favourable to trade.

It will thus be seen that certain evidence points towards the likelihood of the site of London having been occupied to some extent in prehistoric times and other evidence of a negative character renders this uncertain. Those who incline to believe that the site which appealed to the Romans would also have been likely to attract the Celtic people who knew it intimately ask why a British name was given to a newly founded city and how it was that when, in the fourth century, the purely Roman name of Augusta was bestowed upon it, that proud title proved itself incapable of holding out against the old name. When Ciria

in Numidia was renamed Constantine the ancient appellation was entirely dropped.

There is the further problem of the Roman roads which converge upon the reach of the Thames between Chelsea and Westminster instead of London. The road from Kent, afterwards called Watling Street, aims straight for Westminster. The Edgware Road, which follows the Roman way to Chester, points to almost the same spot. The presumption is that the British tracks led to a ford in the river at Westminster or Chelsea, missing the site of London by a good two miles. It could be argued that on this account no settlement worth the name existed there at that time. On the other hand, the lack of a bridge would oblige traffic to go the additional distance upstream, and as soon as a bridge was built the short connecting road would be constructed. It is quite possible that this is what actually happened.

Finally, it is worthy of note that York, the great legionary headquarters in the military zone of Britain, was not directly approached by the Roman trunk road from the capital to the Northern frontier. It was directed upon Aldborough, and to reach York it was necessary to turn very much towards the east. The position is, in fact, a fairly close parallel with that of Roman London.

It may be that the question of the age of the

capital will never be known with any precision and that future generations will have to be content with going over the evidence and forming their own opinions.

## II

### DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD

CÆSAR'S serious attack upon Britain in 54 B.C. and his subjugation of the south-eastern corner of the island does not lift the veil of obscurity from the site of London. When, however, after the defeated tribes had been paying tribute for ninety-seven years, the Emperor Claudius decided to add the island to the Roman Empire, the historian Dio Cassius refers to severe fighting at the bridge across the Thames, and all available evidence points to this having been situated at London. It is more than probable, therefore, that, whatever had been the settlement on the twin hills in Cæsar's time, by A.D. 43 the site had sufficient inhabitants to build a timber bridge across the river. From very remote times the Celtic people had ample knowledge as to the best methods of driving piles for the construction of houses on the margins of rivers and lakes, and Cæsar's comments on the ships built by the traders in the Channel show clearly that these tribes were exceedingly capable

in the use of heavy timber. There were, therefore, no insurmountable difficulties in the way when the first Londoners decided to span the river with a bridge.

When the conquering legions under the veteran General Aulus Plautius reached the Thames and overcame the resistance of the Britons where stood the bridge, they crossed to the northern bank and waited there for the arrival of the Emperor. The resistance of the tribes led by Caratacus was broken and the task of advancing to his capital and inflicting a final defeat upon him was to be carried out in the presence of Claudius himself. It seems very clear, therefore, that the ceremonial reception of a Roman Emperor took place at, or close to London in A.D. 44. The legions marched towards Colchester (Camulodunum), Caratacus made another stand, was overcome and fled to the West, and the Roman troops took possession of the British capital.

In the sixteen years which succeeded there is no reference to London, but it is significant that in the year 60 the Roman Imperial Procurator's headquarters were not at Colchester. He evidently had located himself at a more accessible centre for administrative purposes. That this was London can scarcely be doubted. Colchester had clearly been found to be off the board from the

point of view of general convenience. Trade did not naturally gravitate to that somewhat remote corner of the territory of the Trinobantes. London had not yet been dignified by the name of a colony, but had become (according to Tacitus) thronged with great numbers of merchants and abundance of merchandize. It was, it seems, a place of growing commercial importance without any military significance whatever. There were no defences and the few troops quartered there were doubtless little more than were required for guards, orderlies, and messengers.

Thus when, in A.D. 60, the great revolt led by Boudicca (wrongly, Boadicea), Queen of the Icenî, brought to Londinium a great host of victory-intoxicated Britons, Paulinus, the Roman Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, decided against making a stand there. He had come south from Anglesey by forced marches with a view to a concentration of his forces at London. To his amazement the town was merely overcrowded with fugitives who had fled thither from the savage tribesmen; none of the other forces at his disposal had arrived at the place of concentration. The busy commercial centre was therefore evacuated; presumably Paulinus thought it well to get the Thames between him and the enemy. London was soon in flames and those of its in-

habitants left there were slaughtered with every form of cruelty. As every schoolboy knows, Boudicca's victorious progress came to a sudden end when she forced a battle upon Paulinus's well-disciplined legionaries and the burnt-out ruins of what had been prosperous Londinium were soon reoccupied. The place was rebuilt, no doubt with more durable materials, and before long became adorned with dignified structures. It is also probable that the landward defensive wall was built at this time.

For more than two centuries history records nothing whatever of the busy and wealthy port on the Thames. In that long period of uninterrupted prosperity London assumed unchallenged pre-eminence among the towns of Roman Britain. In size, population, and wealth the port on the Thames outstripped every other place in the island. Its area (within the walls) of 350 acres may be compared with Corinium (Chichester), the next largest city, covering 240 acres, and Verulamium (St. Albans) with only 203. The basilica of Londinium was proportionately larger than those of the two places mentioned, and there can be little doubt that all the public buildings, temples, and other large edifices would have been on correspondingly imposing lines.

The fact that there was at this period no history



to record, points emphatically to an exceptionally uneventful epoch of peace and prosperity. There were anxious times for the Commander-in-Chief when at different periods there occurred serious risings on the northern frontier. Military disasters of such importance took place that Emperors on various occasions hurried to Britain, and London no doubt saw Hadrian and Septimius Severus on their way up to York and the remoter regions of Caledonia; but these rumblings of warfare were far off, and if they meant anything to London it amounted to little more than an increased demand for supplies and equipment for the troops—excellent business for a number of merchants—and interesting items of news to discuss over the dining-tables and in the forum and taverns.

During these two centuries the first influences of Christianity must have found their way into the capital. By the middle of the third century there may have been some sort of organised British Church in the country, for one of the martyrologies mentions a Bishop of Londinium named Augulus. To the Synod of Arelate (Arles) held in 314 went a Bishop of London named Restitutus, who was one of the three representing Britain at that council of the Early Church. About the year 420 Fastidius held the Bishopric of London, but of all three Bishops nothing more is known, and

of their dioceses there is no information whatever. Even the help given by archæology is extremely slight. It takes the form of the Christian monogram (Chi-Rho) impressed on earthenware lamps and some small ingots of pewter and a few indications of crosses on mosaic pavements. In addition, there is a very early font at St. Etheldreda's Church in Ely Place, Holborn, which may stand on the site of a Christian place of worship just outside the city walls.

The prosperity of Britain and its capital was not seriously interrupted until the latter half of the fourth century, for, although many parts of the Empire were suffering severely from invasion, famine, and civil war, the province of Britannia remained unaffected to any considerable extent by these disruptive happenings. The evil effects of a usurper were, however, felt temporarily in Londinium in 296. Eleven years before this the threat of invasion from overseas by the Saxons had necessitated the appointment of an admiral of the fleets based on Richborough and Boulogne. The man chosen was Carausius, a Menapian of Northern Gaul. So decisive was the power placed in his hands that he and the fleet under him felt strong enough to mutiny. Proclaiming himself local emperor, he soon won over the Roman army in Britain, and demonstrated his authority by set-

ting up a mint in Londinium, from which poured a very great quantity of gold, silver, and bronze. This was the first Roman coinage known with certainty to have been issued in Britain in the period of Roman dominion.

In 293, Carausius was murdered by an officer named Allectus, who maintained himself for three years as usurping local emperor after the manner of his predecessor. He continued the mint at Londinium. Constantius "Chlorus," the sub-Emperor of the West, was then strong enough to attack him with two fleets, one of which sailed up the Thames to the capital. The other fleet had landed a considerable force which defeated the troops under Allectus. The usurper was slain, and the survivors of the battle, largely Frankish mercenaries, retreated in confusion to Londinium, and were plundering recklessly in the city and killing those who resisted, when the fleet of Constantius providentially dropped anchor in the Pool. Armed forces were quickly landed, and the mercenaries met their fate in the streets and houses wherein they were caught.

This second disturbance to the peace of Roman London—236 years had passed since the first during Boudicca's rebellion—caused infinite alarm in every circle of life in Londinium. The saving of the city from the horde of Frankish mercen-

aries was commemorated by a very remarkable gold medallion, struck, not in Londinium, but in Trèves, on which the rescued city is represented by the figure of a woman kneeling at a gateway identified by the letters LON. In front of her is a unireme, or galley, with a single tier of oars, and over it Constantius is shown carrying a spear and astride a heavy war-horse.

If, as is probable, Londinium were walled at this time, the gates must have been opened to the defeated troops of Allectus by the guards left in the city. Although it cannot be stated with absolute certainty that the landward wall was erected in the first century, all the evidence existing points to that early date. At two later periods when, no doubt, great dangers threatened, the defensive ditch was deepened and trebled in width and forty or fifty bastions were added to the three landward sides. So enduring was the great work that, excluding the river frontage, it would undoubtedly be standing to-day had it not gradually come to be regarded as an inconvenience to the inhabitants. The wall towards the land, patched and rebuilt a great deal above a certain height, was to a great extent standing until 1766, when the Commissioners of Sewers obtained Parliamentary sanction for its demolition. In spite of this, portions of some of the bastions, and many sections

of the wall are still standing, mainly embedded in modern construction. Few are aware that near the Tower the wall can be seen from the Roman lower courses to the medieval parapet walk.

After the relief of Londinium in 296 no other event is recorded concerning the capital until 367. In this period of seventy years, although the menace of the Saxon invaders was growing rather than diminishing, the prosperity would appear to have been maintained. There were, indeed, probably few cities within the wide limits of the Roman Empire which carried on so successfully in the fourth century, when the far-flung frontiers were giving way in all directions under the tremendous pressure of the barbarian onslaught. Its insular position, while it compelled naval as well as military defence, was in a sense its safety. So long as the Saxon shore was well patrolled, trading vessels could sail from the Pool, and, passing inside Thanet, slip across to Boulogne and other Channel ports with slight risk. And the longer sea voyages to Bordeaux and beyond were no doubt hardly more dangerous except from stress of weather. On this account, the carriage from Londinium of the abundant wheat and other cereals, lead, silver, and perhaps iron, woollen goods, hides, cattle, oysters and pearls, slaves from the Northern frontiers, and many other commodi-

ties would have continued with little delay or interruption.

The city at this period had reached the zenith of its fame. It ranked, no doubt, with those forming the group immediately below such mighty units as Rome, Alexandria, Milan, and Constantinople. The public buildings, if not famous for their art, could not have been lacking in a certain splendour and dignity, and the houses of the richest citizens were, no doubt, adorned with much taste and furnished with every luxury. The average Londoner was probably well dressed, and the baths would have drawn to them all the better classes of society.

Because the slight survivals of the monuments of the Roman age of London are so little known, and still less thought upon, the average man and woman of to-day finds it extremely hard to realise that the city was in all respects run on the usual Roman lines, with certain modifications induced by the climate, local conditions, and the conservative tendencies of the British. Being mainly a commercial city, Londinium, with its cosmopolitan inhabitants, was doubtless less Celtic than any other in the island. Every tongue along the western coasts of Europe and throughout the Mediterranean would be spoken on the quays and in the riverside lodging-houses and taverns. Every re-

ligious cult would find its votaries among the floating population by the waterside. It need not on this account be thought that the city had no cohesiveness. On the contrary, it has from the first appeared to possess an intense local patriotism which has caused it to come through disaster after disaster without losing its powers of recuperation.

In 367 the defences of Britain on land and sea gave way almost simultaneously, and hordes of savage Northern tribesmen swarmed southwards over the peaceful Midlands, burning, plundering, and killing as they went. Fortified towns held out, but in large areas small undefended places and the isolated homesteads were surrounded by the barbarians, and the description of the invasion given by Ammianus Marcellinus allows one to believe that the capital was practically isolated. The legions and the auxiliaries appear to have suffered so terribly as to be unable to make any efforts to check the horrible flood of destruction.

The province was saved when the Emperor Valentinian I. sent his great Spanish general, Count Theodosius, to Britain with heavy reinforcements. The invaders were rounded up or driven out and the frontier restored, but it is improbable that the country ever fully recovered from the disaster. The population of the capital must have been temporarily increased through a certain

percentage of the neighbouring inhabitants being homeless and through the natural fear of recommencing life in the open country. Had not bastions been added at an earlier date they would certainly have been erected at this time. Some of those which show signs of hurried construction may possibly belong to the very last years of the fourth century, when Stilicho, the great Vandal Magister Militum, or virtual ruler of the Western Empire under the foolish Emperor Honorius, paid great attention to the land defences of Britain.

There is little more to tell of the history of Londinium. The contemporary historians make no further references to it. The latest document that mentions the city is the *Notitia Dignitatum*—something between a Statesman's Year Book and an Army List—which may have been written as late as A.D. 429, but is perhaps of earlier date. In it there is reference to the Treasury being at Londinium. The name Augusta had been bestowed upon the city not long before the disaster of 367.

In the early years of the fifth century the imperative need for reinforcements on the Continent resulted in orders being sent to Britain for the removal of the three legions which had defended it so long. Thereafter, the Romanised Britons were compelled to organise their own defences. They raised and trained sufficient troops



to maintain the struggle with the overseas invaders for well over a century, but after the year 457, when it is mentioned that the British army was defeated in a battle on the River Cray, in Kent, and retreated to the shelter of the walls of Londinium, there is no further reference to the capital until early in the seventh century, when the pale dawn of history again steals upon the city.

### III

## LONDON IN THE DARK AGES

THROUGHOUT the four centuries when Britain was a Roman province, London was governed from Rome except during the comparatively brief periods when usurpers were in control. After the chaotic interval when the Roman city was obliged to defend itself, it must almost inevitably have become for a certain period the centre of sovereign power in Britain. In subsequent times, however, the ancient city seems to have been compelled to become a detached city-state. Kingdoms might rise and fall, new dynasties appear, invaders might control the eastern coastal districts and sweep past the city to the West, but London went on her way determined to hold herself independent. Her impregnable walls appear to have made it possible to retain this isolation throughout the century and a half of Anglo-Saxon invasion. It has frequently been stated that London, in, or soon after, the reign of Honorius, having been overcome by the attacks of the overseas invaders, was reduced

to a heap of ruins, that its inhabitants fled or were killed, and that until the beginning of the seventh century the once proud city remained a ghost-haunted waste of crumbling ruins. There is, however, much evidence for believing that the great city continued its existence in spite of having to pass through a time of infinite stress and hardship, during which the overseas trade, upon which its wealth had to a large extent been built up, almost vanished. With a much shrunken population and, as a consequence, a considerable amount of dilapidation and decay in its streets, it is probable that Londinium held out against the invaders, and that when the English had established themselves firmly in the neighbouring counties and the hostility had naturally died down, the Romano-British city-state gradually became absorbed into one of the newly formed kingdoms.

Had Londinium ever been taken by storm it is quite inconceivable that such a tremendous event should not have been mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which refers to it as being securely in British hands as late as 457. There is also the fact that the city was not renamed as were Canterbury and St. Albans, while Ludgate and Dowgate appear to be Celtic rather than English. Beyond this it is worth remembering that the Londoners possessed extra-mural rights in

Middlesex which they held to with great tenacity. This area adjoining the city has been compared by Sir Laurence Gomme with the Roman *pomœrium*, which was left free from buildings outside the walls of a town, and he has also drawn attention to various ancient usages and rights which it has been the custom of London to claim from Anglo-Saxon times onwards. How far he was right in urging that these ancient rights, which are curiously Latin in form, had had their origin when London was a Roman city is much disputed. After considering all the evidence there seems to be sufficient ground for regarding it as very probable that London was never left entirely uninhabited. There are modern instances in the devastated areas of France and Belgium of the return of populations to wrecked cities after an interval of a few years, and perhaps there were brief periods during the Dark Ages when London was evacuated, but the silence of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* appears to be almost conclusive evidence against any such signal success upon the part of the invaders.

Seven years after the landing of Augustine and his monks in Kent in 597 the long silence of history in regard to London is broken by a reference to the appointment of Abbot Mellitus to the Bishopric of London. Until the death of Æthelberht

in 616 Mellitus continued to work in London and appears to have converted from heathenism Sæberht, King of the East Saxons, in whose territory London was situated. His sons, however, had been very little affected by the new teaching, and on the death of their father, Sigeberht, his successor, and his brothers treated Mellitus and those who attended the Eucharistic celebrations with roughness, interrupting the services and demanding the consecrated bread without submitting to baptism. On meeting with firm refusal Mellitus and his followers were ejected from the kingdom and eventually took refuge in France. This setback no doubt resulted in the desecration of the first St. Paul's Cathedral, if not its entire destruction. Unfortunately, nothing is known of that early structure. More than possibly it was a Roman building adapted for the new worship, for although Bede states that King Æthelberht built the Church of St. Paul he also mentions that Pope Gregory the Great instructed Mellitus to convert temples "from the worship of devils to the service of the true God." London having been cut off from its relations with the Christian Church, the twilight of heathendom again falls upon the city. There may have been a certain increase in trade owing to the gradual recovery of agriculture and industry consequent on the comparative cessation

of hostilities. Bede refers to London as a "mart of many nations," and elsewhere mentions the fact of prisoners of war being sold as slaves in London.

After an interval of some forty years it appears that Cedd, who was active in Essex at that time, began to have some sort of influence over the Saxons ruled by Sigeberht II. and on this account has been called Bishop of London on the frailest authority. London in time came under the control of the Kings of Mercia and then passed to Wessex, whose power grew and whose dominion extended under that energetic law-giver, King Ine. The fact that he refers to Earconwald, who became Bishop of London about 685, as "my Bishop," seems to imply that the King of Wessex had secured control of the great walled town on the Thames. When Ine died in 726 his kingdom very rapidly disintegrated. Mercia recovered under Æthelbald and London once more was included within its boundaries.

How far these and subsequent changes in England affected London is not known. It is quite possible that the city-state contrived to continue to administer its own affairs and carry on its trade with a certain detachedness from the warring states which in turn claimed it as a part of their possessions. Nothing is known at this early period of how the city was governed; one must be guided

by the possibilities in any ideas one forms. No existing record mentions a portreeve or any official until the reign of Edward the Confessor more than two centuries later, but there seems some justification for believing that at an early date the Bishop of London and a portreeve would be the two most powerful personages in the fast-recovering town, as was the case in 1066 when William the Conqueror addressed his charter to them.

The new St. Paul's, built or renovated by Bishop Earconwald, appears to have had some claims to splendour, and it is very probable that London was reviving very much from the state of decay and dilapidation into which it had fallen during the fifth century. It is probable that all new buildings would have been of timber, with roofs of thatch, for brick-making entirely ceased not long after the collapse of the Roman authority and stone-masons were few. The repair of a stone building of importance with stone taken from an adjoining ruin is, however, equally likely. The city had doubtless become highly inflammable and was destined to remain so for ten centuries.

The years of London's renewed prosperity were, however, numbered. The black-sailed ships of the Northmen (or Vikings), which had brought many anxious moments to Charles the Great, were,

in the first half of the ninth century, more and more frequently seen off the coasts of England. The sack of the famous monastery of Lindisfarne in 793 was not followed at once by other raids. "The heathen men," as they are called in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, were busy with easier prey in Ireland, Scotland, and Frankland (France). It was in about 833 that they began their attacks on England, and in 839 or soon afterwards one reads that they caused great slaughter in London. How they entered the strongly walled city will probably never be known. Perhaps the riverside defences had collapsed to some extent and through these breaches the fierce Northmen axed their way. The Londoners drove out the attackers, and it would seem impossible that the city should not have at once put itself in a state of defence, and yet twelve years later, in 851, the Northmen again stormed London. The *Chronicle* is painfully brief, merely mentioning that 350 ships came into the Thames estuary, that their crews landed, apparently, both in Essex and in Kent, for the storming of London took place about the same time as the fall of Canterbury.

These two disasters, told with so few words, may well have been the worst experienced by the city since the sack by Boudicca. They are certainly the only ones recorded apart from the



plundering and rioting caused by the mercenaries of Allectus. The Northmen were great destroyers and used fire very freely. When darkness fell on that tragic day in 851 the waters of the Pool no doubt reflected the great columns of flame and the showers of sparks that arose from the burning city—for burnt it must have been. The great heat no doubt calcined the walls of Roman buildings and caused such destruction that, when London was rebuilt, the Roman street plan, if it survived, as is possible, the chaotic years of the fifth century, would have to a great extent disappeared. Perhaps some of the streets had been lost in the earlier period and those which had survived disappeared after this great disaster. The victorious Danish forces crossed the Thames with Winchester as their objective, but were met at Aclea (? Ockley in Surrey) by the army of Wessex and suffered a crushing defeat. The Londoners were therefore free to repair their walls and reconstruct their houses. It is not known, however, to what extent the inhabitants had been slaughtered or what attempts at reconstruction took place.

Nothing is recorded concerning the ruined city until twenty-one years later, when the Northmen came down the Thames from Reading and wintered in London. The record of this event is, unfortunately, too brief to enable one to under-

stand what happened, but it would seem that the town was too weak to make any serious resistance. Had it recovered so little in two decades that its inhabitants were incapable of putting up a fight? It is at least clear that the Viking fleets held London for some years, and that the place was more or less in their hands until 886. In that year Alfred, who had become King in 871, obtained possession of the once opulent and all-powerful city, repaired its breached walls, and made it habitable once more. Between the disaster of 851 and the restoration by Alfred the interval was thirty-five years, and it may be that London was more or less depopulated during a considerable portion of that time. Yet Halfdene, the Dane, had minted silver pennies while he was in London, which suggests the presence of skilled craftsmen and a good deal more. The recovery was definitely due to Alfred, and still London possesses no statue of that wisest, noblest, and most far-sighted of English sovereigns!

Alfred struck coins to commemorate the resuscitation of London in which the name of the city appears in abbreviated form (LONDI) on the reverse, almost exactly as on Halfdene's coins. Strangely enough, he omitted the cross inserted by the Viking.

Now began the long and fierce phase of the

struggle with the Northmen, during which London played a vital part as the key to the possession of the Thames Valley. So long as the strongly walled city with its bridge was held by the English the invaders could not reach Wessex in their ships. In the capable hands of Alfred's son-in-law Æthelred, who, as Ealdorman of Mercia, controlled the shrunken territory of the great Offa, London was held securely. Its integrity undoubtedly contributed a most vital element in the task of clearing the Vikings out of England.

During the century which followed the restoration of London scarcely anything is recorded of the city save that it suffered severely from plague in 961 and in the same year St. Paul's Minster was burned. There was also a disastrous fire in 982. When England was once more subjected to the attacks of the Northmen, or Danes, it was at London in 992 that a powerful fleet was assembled at the instance of Æthelred and the Witan, one of the admirals being none other than the aged Ælfstan, Bishop of London. Unfortunately, this was a time when treason was rife among the nobles. Disunion and distrust gave the Vikings their opportunity. In 994 Sweyn and Olaf blockaded London with a fleet of ninety-four vessels and, as usual, attempted to set it on fire, only to find that what was possible in 851 could

not be repeated, and they withdrew, having "sustained more harm and evil than they ever supposed that any citizens could inflict upon them"—obviously an early instance of the good fighting material to be found in town-dwelling "contemptibles" when roused.

In the early years of the next century the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records how the Danes often attacked London, "but glory be to God, that it yet standeth firm: and they ever there met with ill fare." One seems to read in this a complete recovery of that spirit of London which had caused it to hold out amid the disasters of the first half of the fifth century and, for all that is known to the contrary, during the four hundred years which followed. At the very moment when the treacherous Eadric "Streona" (the Grasper) was paying blackmail to the Danes in the form of the huge sum of 48,000 pounds of silver, the body of Alphege (or Ælfeah), Archbishop of Canterbury, whom they had murdered while a prisoner in their hands, was brought into London and deposited with great ceremony in St. Paul's.

Throughout the disastrous years of the reign of Æthelred, the Ill-Counselled or Redeless (incorrectly "the Unready"), London was always staunch and successful in its resistance. Even when the youthful but redoubtable Cnut laid siege

to the city, it held out and was relieved by that good general, King Eadmund II. On his death the Londoners had no choice but to accept Cnut as his successor. Thereupon they had to produce 10,500 pounds of silver towards the paying-off of the new king's army of mercenaries. That it was capable of finding this great sum is evidence of the city's remarkable prosperity. The young king thought it necessary to secure himself by the execution of all likely to be dangerous, among whom was the arch-traitor Eadric "the Grasper." He was summarily disposed of in London, according to one account being felled with an axe at Cnut's order and in his presence.

The hot-tempered young Viking became, as the years passed, sincerely religious, and allied himself closely to the English clergy. As a consequence of this a solemn occasion was witnessed in London in 1023, when the remains of the murdered Archbishop Alphege were, in the presence of the king and a great assemblage of clergy and laity, taken to Southwark by water and there received by Archbishop Æthelnoth and conveyed to Canterbury. If Matthew of Westminster may be trusted, Cnut, as an act of penitence no doubt, lifted the body from the tomb with his own hands. The story given in the same *Chronicle* of Cnut's order to the tide to advance no farther, elsewhere

described as taking place at Westminster, is another illustration of the remarkable change which came over this young warrior king.

Harthacnut, the second son to succeed to the throne, was seized with a fit at Lambeth (possibly Clapham) while drinking at a wedding feast and died soon afterwards; then, before he was buried, "all men chose Eadward for King in London." Thus "the Confessor," that helpless son of "the Ill-Counselled" Æthelred, who was more fitted for a monastery than a palace, assumed nominal control of the affairs of England until the last year of the Anglo-Saxon period. In that time very little is recorded save for a naval demonstration made at London by Earl Godwin, as the result of which the Norman episcopal advisers of the king deemed it advisable to escape from the city, which they succeeded in doing by cutting their way through the guards at Aldgate.

In 1042 Wulfgar is mentioned as Portreeve of London—the first name associated with that high office. From this time forward, England being brought more and more under Norman influence, the records become less brief, and during the next century the history of London expands until the mists of the Dark Ages are quite dispersed.

## IV

### NORMAN LONDON

THE year 1066 was only five days old when Edward the Confessor died at Westminster, and on the morrow Harold, the son of Godwin, was crowned King of England in his stead. In May Halley's comet appeared and caused much anxiety, for all men looked upon it as a portent—but of what? Londoners had not long to wait. There was a blow preparing for England across the Channel. William the Norman laid claim to the English Crown, and it was known that an invasion on a great scale would take place if Harold's fleet could not defeat the Norman host before it landed. London was the royal headquarters, and there was gathered the sea and land power of his realm. It was the greatest army and navy ever brought together by an English king. Prolonged suspense and anxiety were felt in the city, for the threatened blow did not fall until the autumn was come. On September 28 William landed on the Sussex coast and the dread moment had arrived.

Harold, fresh from a victory in the north, was back in London on October 7, and from thence he marched to meet the invader. In his army went a large force of the men of the city. On the 14th was fought the Battle of Senlac Hill. It was the last time that Londoners were to wield their axes and swords under the banner bearing the dragon of the descendants of the great Alfred, for from the south there soon came little parties of survivors of the battle bringing the staggering news of the irretrievable disaster. When Esegarr the Staller arrived wounded and was carried across London Bridge in a litter, the full story of the defeat became known. Not only were the King and his noble brothers among the dead, but with them lay nearly every leader around whom it might have been possible to rally. The situation was indeed dark, but London could still fight, for her defences were in good order. The levies from the Midlands and the North under their Earls Eadwine and Morkere had reached the city, and there seemed every reason for resisting the Normans. Preparations for the defence went forward apace.

On the news coming in that the enemy had reached Berkhamstead, it appeared that William's object was to isolate the city, and the new situation caused the loyalty of the two Northern earls



to evaporate. England's separate parts had not been sufficiently welded to hold together in this crisis, and London found herself denuded of defenders and alone. Even so, the reputation of the city was sufficiently formidable for William to be wary of burning his fingers by bringing his host to attack its towered defences. To win over the wealthy Londoners by fair words would suit him far better than a long-drawn-out siege in winter. Both sides had much to gain by a peaceful settlement of the issue, and there was the material fact that the Bishop of London was a Norman and no doubt voiced the foreign element among the inhabitants when the discussion as to submission or otherwise took place. Traders are inclined to favour strong rulers who are able to establish and maintain peace, and thus the Witan accepted William the Norman as King of England, and he found himself master of London without striking a blow.

Before his entry into the city he ordered suitable preparations for his "royal magnificence" and also the erection within the walls of a stockaded citadel—afterwards made permanent as a great stone fortress which came to be known as the Tower of London. The coronation ceremony took place at Westminster, accompanied by bloodshed, but this was due to a misunderstanding on the part

of the troops outside the abbey church who, hearing a great shout of approval, misinterpreted it as the beginning of a disturbance of the ceremony.

Evidence of the new ruler's desire to conciliate the people of his chief city is found in the Conqueror's charter to London, which, though it bore his second seal, was evidently granted early in his reign. Its wording is brief enough, but its tone is agreeable; it is addressed to the two chief officials of the city:

“William, King, greets William, Bishop, and Gosfregth (Godfrey), Portreeve, and all the burghers within Londone, French and English, friendly. And I give you to know that I will that you be all those laws worthy that you were in the days of King Eadwerde. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day. And I will not suffer that any man offer you any wrong. God keep you.”

This portreeve was probably Geoffrey de Mandeville, whose office was not dissimilar to that of the shire-reeve, or sheriff.

What little is known of London architecturally in this period shows it to be so largely constructed with inflammable materials that it was often a prey to disastrous fires. The bridge was of tim-

ber, and it would seem that nearly all the buildings except those of prime importance were of the same material. Even the first fort built by William was of timber, and the use of thatch was widespread. On this account the appearance of the streets must have been singularly quaint and unpretentious and a remarkable contrast to what might have been expected after the first impression given by the formidable bastioned walls. Twelve years passed before William's temporary citadel was rebuilt with great solidity in stone and concrete. The Conqueror was determined that the independent spirit of the city should be definitely curbed. Henceforth the overwhelming influence of London in all great issues was to be placed beneath that of the royal will. In other words, the whole realm was to submit to William's government and there were to be no elements sufficiently strong to interfere in a crisis.

With the coming of Norman rule there began to be felt a great stimulus towards an improvement in architecture. While there may have been a fair number of skilful stone-masons in Saxon England there lacked the will and also the forced labour to create great structures in stone which were forthcoming under the new rulers. London reflected the new building energy in a marked degree, and had not so many great fires occurred

during the next two centuries there would doubtless have been more examples existing to-day of the architecture of the Norman period. In spite of the many fiery ordeals through which the city has passed, London preserves to this day not only the Conqueror's great keep, but four or five churches which are in part of that period. The picturesque crypt of St. Mary le Bow links the city with the eleventh century, and a considerable part of the monastic church of St. Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield, just outside the town wall, carries back those who enter its shadowy interior to about the year 1123. Of documentary survivals belonging to this period there are very few, and on this account the history of Norman London is still slight and greatly lacking in detail.

In 1077 there was an extensive fire, and ten years later another conflagration included St. Paul's in the area of its destruction. The autumn of 1091 was marked by a hurricane which destroyed a number of churches and six hundred houses. The force of the wind was so great that London Bridge (then of timber) was largely demolished. The Londoners had scarcely recovered from this great fire and the subsequent storm when, in the following March, they were afflicted by yet another great holocaust. How little the experience of these disasters profited the city is

shown by the occurrence forty years later of yet another huge outbreak. Florence of Worcester, the chronicler, calmly records that "the greater part of the city of London with the principal church of St. Paul the Apostle was destroyed by fire." Only four years later—*i.e.*, in 1136—there occurred another vast fire which extended from London Bridge to the church of St. Clement Danes, and St. Paul's once more suffered. This was the fifth burning of London since the Norman Conquest. It was during these frequent disasters, no doubt, that most of the remains of buildings of the Romano-British period were calcined and destroyed until there existed very few relics of that age besides the imperishable town wall and perhaps some of its gateways.

During the reign of William II. great works in stone were begun. Bishop Maurice, confronted with a ruined cathedral, caused plans to be prepared for a new St. Paul's on such a vast scale that it was clearly aimed to eclipse that of Winchester which, however, remains the longest in England. Notwithstanding the damage done by the fires just mentioned, the vast Romanesque pile was completed in due course, and its imposing nave and transepts were standing in 1666, when the last and the most disastrous fire of London reduced it to a calcined ruin. There was much

activity at the Tower, for the King decided to erect an outer defence of stone. It became an inner wall in the reign of Henry III. through a subsequent addition. William also built for his palace at Westminster a great hall whose Gothic successor is one of the chief features of the Houses of Parliament to this day. The reign was, however, an unhappy one for London, for the King demanded from the city great sums and much forced labour for his building enterprises, while executions of rebels and others was not calculated to cause devotion to the Crown. The news, therefore, of William's accidental death in the New Forest came as a relief to the capital.

For how long Winchester continued to enjoy the position of rival to London as the royal capital is only vaguely known. The Hampshire town had assumed importance as the capital of the kings of Wessex and continued to be a royal residence and capital city for some time after the Norman Conquest. Its importance waned, however, owing to the more favourable position for trade of its great rival, and it probably never recovered from the blow it received through the siege and pillaging which took place in the reign of Stephen.

Under the firm rule of Henry I., the brother of William the Red, London carried on in peace and prosperity, suffering, it is true, a good deal

from heavy taxation, but reaping the advantages attendant upon the new King's determination to check abuses. The enterprise of those who had been debasing the coinage was rudely checked by the loss of the right hand and emasculation and, says one of the chroniclers: "No man durst misdo against another in his time." In the same reign a great ecclesiastical conference under Cardinal John of Crema sat for three days in London devising measures for keeping the clergy more closely to their vows of celibacy. New orders were sent forth, but it is clear that little or no notice was taken of them.

From Henry I. London obtained its second charter. It granted to the city the right to elect its own sheriff, and also to take Middlesex directly under its control. Parts of this adjacent area appear to have been linked with London from very early times. It may have been the *territorium* of the city in the Roman period. Henry's charter also gave to the Londoners the authority to select a justiciar from among themselves. This official held the pleas of the Crown. There were other very important concessions, among them being the extinction of the right of the King and others to quarter themselves and their great retinues upon householders by force; the citizens were no longer to pay certain taxes and dues, among them being

the Danegeld; they and their goods were to have free passage in all parts of England, including the ports; the city's courts of law were to be freed from the interference of outside authorities, and the court of Hustings (old Norwegian *hústhing*), an institution going back at least to the reign of Cnut, which was held for pleas of land, common pleas and appeals from the sheriffs, was authorised to assemble every Monday; the unpopular trial by battle was made obsolete, and, what was a matter of considerable consequence in that age, the lands where the city had had its hunting were confirmed to it.

On the death of Henry I., when the choice of a successor lay between his daughter Matilda, who was married to Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, and Stephen, Count of Blois, grandson of the Conqueror, Londoners shouted against the first, calling him a foreigner, and agreed to accept Stephen. Through the support given to him by the most powerful city of the realm, Stephen was enabled to keep himself on the throne for six chaotic years, and, after his capture and rescue by his heroic queen, Maud, continued to reign in a weak fashion while the country remained in a state of anarchy.

It was in the interregnum, when the Empress Maud entered London as Queen of England, that



she alienated the citizens by giving immense powers, including those of sheriff, to Geoffrey de Mandeville, a treacherous Norman baron who had been Constable of the Tower. He played a very prominent part in the period of anarchy and finished his career as an outlaw and bandit in the Fen country. The widespread disorder did not prevail inside the walls of London, and trade grew in spite of the adverse conditions. This period is marked by a steady increase in the foreign element in the city. Under William II. the Jewish quarter had come into being, and Henry I. granted to the Jews his royal protection. The Frenchmen and the immigrants from the Low Countries, who settled in London, soon identified themselves with the city of their adoption and became regarded as Londoners. One of these newcomers was Gilbert Becket, whose son Thomas became Archbishop of Canterbury and the most popular saint of the English.

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## V

### LONDON UNDER THE PLANTAGENETS

THE reign of Henry II. brought peace and security once more to England, and London profited in many ways at the outset, being relieved by hearing that the new king had issued an order for the banishment of the foreign mercenary soldiers installed in the city and elsewhere. Henry was never for long in London, and during his reign of thirty-five years he was there only about twenty-eight times. The outstanding events of the period, so far as the city is concerned, were the granting of another charter on the lines of that given by Henry I., but omitting the right to elect its sheriff and any mention of a justiciar; the building of the new London Bridge with stone; and the events connected with Thomas Becket's birth and career in London.

The bridge, in spite of its frailty and liability to be consumed by fire, was renewed with elm as late as 1163. Not until 1176 was its stone successor begun, through the inspiration and energy

of Peter, the rector of St. Mary Colechurch, who died in 1205, four years before the completion of this great piece of medieval engineering, which soon won European fame as one of the wonders of the world. Almost before its cement was dry, wooden houses began to appear along the sides of the bridge. These added great picturesqueness to a structure already beautified with a chapel and a gateway. Owing to the abnormally long time taken in its building, London's first stone bridge was begun in the period of architecture known as Transitional Norman and was not finished until the Early English period of Gothic was fully established.

There can be no doubt that London was at this time becoming a beautiful city. A contemporary account by Fitz-Stephen, the biographer of Becket, touches upon the attractive situation of the city beside the silver Thames alive with fish, including salmon, and mentions its 126 parish churches, its thirteen monasteries, its two castles, the cathedral, and the Tower. The timber-built houses lining the narrow streets were no doubt becoming more skilfully constructed, although the majority had no upper floor. The days of thatch were becoming numbered, for in the reign of Richard I. (1189-1199) that roofing material was forbidden. Again and again this rule had to be enacted.

The sanitary conditions reigning in the city were, however, notoriously bad, for the streets were ill paved, and too many were not paved at all. Refuse heaps lay in front of the houses, oxen and pigs were too often reared in the houses, and these animals were commonly allowed to roam in the streets. There were no proper arrangements for getting rid of the sewage, and, as a consequence, the streams became filthy and noisome. The smells of London at this period must have been at certain times of the year almost insupportable. Need one be surprised at the frequent outbreaks of epidemics and various forms of plague? The city began to get its streets in better condition by the appointment of scavengers in each ward, one of whose duties was to suppress the habit of keeping refuse and rubbish in front of the houses.

The coming to the throne of Richard "the Lion-hearted" caused momentous things in regard to the government of London. The new king at once saw that high adventure in Palestine was available to him if he could only lighten the purses of his subjects sufficiently. London's richest citizens had been shorn of a tenth of their wealth to further the crusade in the year before Richard's accession, but this was only the beginning of the demands made on them for the same object. The

lion-hearted king would sell the highest offices, earldoms, anything for which he could obtain a price, and in jest remarked that he would have sold London itself if he could have found a rich enough buyer. Through an erroneous report that Richard had approved of the rough usage by his foreign servants of a deputation of Jews, who at the coronation came to present a gift, a mob plundered and burnt the well-built Jewish quarter of the city. Amid scenes of savagery many of the unfortunate Israelites were massacred. The lower classes hated the Jews as foreigners and usurers, and seized the opportunity of plundering their homes.

As soon as Richard had raised the funds that he required, London saw no more of him until five years had elapsed. The city had helped to pay the enormous ransom demanded by the Emperor Henry VI. before he would agree to release his captive. On March 15, 1194, the Londoners received back their absentee sovereign with great rejoicings, the streets being gay with the richness of medieval decoration. But something momentous in the civic life had happened in the interval. London had been granted a commune. This innovation was regarded by both Henry II. and Richard I. as so dangerous that Richard of Devizes says that neither monarch would have conceded it

even for a million marks. It was accounted at the time a municipal revolution, for it placed the control of London in the hands of a mayor, twelve *éschevins*, and the honest men with him, to whom all citizens swore loyalty in addition to their oath to the sovereign. The all-important office of sheriff, or portreeve, now became a subsidiary one; the two sheriffs were to become merely "the eyes of the mayor." The *éschevins*, or *skivini*, appear to have closely resembled aldermen, for the foreign name soon gave way to the English one, and the number was in time increased to twenty-five, which gave each ward of the city its representative. The new form of government was essentially foreign, and appears to have been imported from Rouen by the Justiciar, Walter de Coutances, archbishop of that city.

The first mayor was Henry Fitz-Ailwyne (or Eylwyn), of Londonstone, whose house evidently stood alongside that famous landmark. The appointment appears to have taken place in 1191 or very soon afterwards. The London chroniclers have apparently blundered in stating that the first mayor took office in 1188. This first appointment was made, or was continued, for life, Fitz-Ailwyne holding the office until his death in 1212, twenty-one years later. His successors did not often hold the office for more than three or four

years, and very often there were intervals between the years.

The reign of John, that king of whom it is difficult to discover anything good, brought one or two advantages to the city, for shortly after his coronation the privileges obtained from Henry II. and Richard I. were again granted, and soon afterwards a fresh charter gave back to Londoners their old rights over Middlesex and also power to choose their own sheriffs. A great occasion in this reign was the visit paid to London in 1207 by Otho of Brunswick, the Holy Roman Emperor. The occasion was marked by a very great display and much decoration and cleansing of the streets. Evidently, notwithstanding heavy taxation, London was still prosperous.

Stephen Langton was now archbishop, and in 1213, at a conference of barons and clergy in St. Paul's, he read the charter by which Henry I. had agreed to end the tyrannical methods of William II. All present stated their determination to fight to the death to uphold those liberties. Civil war now became imminent, and the city protected its walls with a new moat. There was a great concentration of the forces of the barons in London, and, as a consequence, the enraged but helpless king placed his seal to the Great Charter at the meeting which took place at Runnymede. Article

13 restored to London the whole of its rights and liberties. As soon as the king's position justified it he repudiated Magna Carta. London was placed under an interdict. Unpleasant though this was, the city had the courage to defy the Pope; it felt strong enough to go its own way; but the barons, being in a difficult position, turned to Louis the Dauphin of France, son of Philip Augustus, who in June of the next year arrived in London at the head of his followers. For the next twelve months the city had an unpleasant time as host to the anti-royalist forces, and was probably glad when the moment came for Louis' departure, and even lent him 1,500 marks to help him and his forces on their way home.

In the sixth year of the reign of Henry III. St. Paul's Cathedral was completed, and the same reign witnessed the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey under the energetic inspiration of the new king, whose enthusiasm for the Gothic style of architecture made the simple Romanesque abbey church of Edward the Confessor appear to him crude and plain. Henry's extravagance and his foreign tastes, due to his upbringing in France, would possibly have only slightly affected his popularity had he not used unconstitutional means to obtain the vast supplies of money required for his artistic and architectural enterprises. Not only



was the city being flayed by the king, but it was also subjected to preposterous demands from the Popes, whose supremacy in England enabled them to turn to that country as a source of wealth.

Parallel with the change in architecture from Romanesque to Gothic came the growth of the craft gilds. These were societies formed among the handicraftsmen in order to defend their interests against the great trade gilds which had hitherto held a position of unchallenged power. These craft gilds headed the discontent which was growing against Henry III.'s government, and they naturally welcomed the lead given by Simon de Montfort in his efforts to keep the king from his tyrannical methods of government. At the same time, the mayoralty came into the hands of Thomas Fitz-Thomas, who held the office for five years after 1261. The royalist element in the city, led by an ex-mayor named John de Gisors, was definitely opposed to allowing Earl Simon's army to enter London. He contrived to lock the gates of the bridge and throw the keys into the river. His action, however, only delayed the entrance of the forces raised by the barons. The position of the king, who had taken refuge in the Tower, was uncomfortable if not dangerous, and on this account Queen Eleanor thought it wise to go up the river by boat to the safer retreat of

Windsor Castle. The royal barge, however, could get no higher than the bridge, where it was stopped by a fusillade of stones and refuse and much abusive language.

On the defeat and death of De Montfort at Evesham in 1265 the city lost the right of electing its own mayor, in place of whom Sir Hugh Fitz-Otes, Constable of the Tower, was made warden. For five years there was no mayor, but at length Queen Eleanor, in the most chivalrous fashion, pleaded for the city which had so grossly insulted her, and in 1270 it was again empowered to choose its own chief official. The first mayor to be chosen after this interlude was John Adrian. He was succeeded by Walter Harvey (or Harvi), who was elected by the Common Council in opposition to the wishes of the aldermen and the wealthier classes.

In the century between 1272-1377, which included the reigns of the first three Edwards, London made very great strides. The rule of Edward I. was, on the whole, efficient, and it was always firm. If the hand of "the Hammer of the Scots" was at times heavy, its weight was overlooked on account of the advantages obtained in other ways. The first mayor of the reign was the popular leader of the craft guilds, Walter Harvey, just mentioned, and during his term of office some

of them attained charters in spite of the opposition of the aldermen and more conservative types of citizen. A year or two later, however, when Harvey was no longer mayor, these charters were withdrawn with royal authority, and an announcement made that those belonging to the various crafts were free to sell wherever they pleased, provided that their goods were of approved quality. This proclamation reveals the fact that the crafts were aiming to secure monopolies for their respective trades.

The year 1279 saw a new silver coinage, and was also remarkable for a winter of extreme severity. So great was the pressure of the ice upon the frozen river that five arches of the bridge broke down. It appears that little attention had been paid to repairs, the bridge tolls having been diverted to Eleanor, the Queen-Mother, in consideration of the goodwill she displayed towards the Londoners after the insulting treatment she had received at their hands. The reconstruction was executed without delay, the funds being obtained from voluntary subscriptions from the whole of England.

In 1285 the mayoralty was once more suspended, on this occasion for thirteen years, during which a Custos, or Warden, chosen by the king, was substituted. During the interval Edward took a step

which was undoubtedly popular, however questionable in its wholesale application. This was the expulsion of the Jews from England. On account of their having been convicted of complicity in the clipping of coinage and the high rate of interest they exacted for loans they had scarcely a friend in the land. Consequently when, in 1290, their deportation was ordered, some 16,000 Jews left the country in the midst of lamentable scenes of cruelty and hatred. In that same year Edward was destined to lose his faithful wife, Eleanor of Castile. When the remains were brought to London, the spot in Cheapside where the cortège halted for a time was afterwards marked by one of those beautiful crosses which the king caused to be set up at each of the resting-places throughout the journey from Lincolnshire. This and the other at Charing were pulled down during the Commonwealth.

Edward's wars with France and Scotland necessitated great supplies of materials and money. London was required to provide very large sums, and the clergy were suddenly obliged to part with half their wealth. All that lay in the treasury of St. Paul's Cathedral was removed by the tax-gatherers. This arbitrary action was too much for the dean, William de Montfort. He determined to obtain an interview with Edward and appeal

for the return of some part of the money which had been seized. In the face of the angry king, however, whose look on such occasions could strike terror into any heart, the dean fell dead in front of his sovereign. This tragedy did not cause Edward to desist from the course he had commenced, but a few years later, in 1297, while standing in Westminster Hall before a great gathering representing all the estates of the kingdom, Edward suddenly broke down. The king who could kill with a look was seen to be in tears, and, to the surprise of all, he admitted that his actions of late had not been just, but had rather been caused by a feeling of exasperation.

The English victory at Falkirk in the following year brought to London as prisoner William Wallace, the Scottish leader. He was tried in Westminster Hall and, as might have been expected, was condemned to die, having been found guilty of treason, sacrilege, and robbery. All who entered London soon afterwards exulted at the sight of the great patriot's head held aloft, hideously, on a spike on the gateway of the Bridge.

If progress had been made in the better ordering of the sanitation of the city, that progress was slow, for as late as 1292 stray pigs were a nuisance in the streets, and fresh orders had to be issued at frequent intervals in regard to the disposal

of sewage and refuse. Citizens continued to break the rules laid down as to roofing materials, for there continued to be many houses with thatched roofs in the opening years of the fourteenth century. Leprosy was a common disease at this time. Outside the city walls there were two hospitals for those suffering from this terrible affliction, and the porters at the gates were required rigorously to exclude lepers. All taverns were required by an order made in 1297 to close at curfew. This hour changed from time to time.

The men of London had a well-earned reputation as redoubtable and well-equipped militia, and time after time the help they gave afloat and on land was of vital importance. There were, indeed, few able-bodied men in London who were not ready and willing to arm when an emergency arose.

The outcome of the civil war between Edward II. and the barons under the Earls of Hereford and Lancaster was a cleavage in London between those who remained loyal to the king and those with whom he was unpopular. When, however, the situation brought about hostilities between Edward and his queen, Isabelle, there was uncertainty as to which side should receive their support.

The king hurriedly left London when the queen

approached with her supporters, and Walter de Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter, the Treasurer, was left to face the excited citizens. The queen proclaimed that she intended to expel the royal favourites—*i.e.*, the two Despensers—and this gave the rougher element among the Londoners the excuse they needed for breaking out against any of the king's ministers within reach. As the result of the clamour, the mayor issued an order that the enemies of the king and queen and their sons must leave London.

The treasurer was riding from his house in the Strand towards the city when he found himself in the midst of the mob and was obliged to take refuge in St. Paul's. He had only just reached the north door when he was dragged from his horse and hurried into Cheapside, where his head was struck off. Two of his squires shared the same fate. The dead bodies lay in the street until the canons of St. Paul's ventured out after dark and placed them in the cathedral. With daylight, however, their fear of the mob caused them to send the body of the great prelate to the church of St. Clement Danes for burial. There, however, the rector refused to allow this to be done, and the episcopal remains were left in the open as mere carrion until some women dug a grave for them in unconsecrated ground.

The first year of the reign (1327) is important as the occasion when some of the chief companies of the city—the Goldsmiths, the Skinners, the Merchant Taylors, and the Girdlers—obtained their charters. This period is remarkable for the development of the gilds and livery companies of the city; it marked the complete fruition of the tendencies which had been growing for the last two centuries, by which every trade was very completely organised, and all who would wish to become citizens and successful traders could do so only through membership of one of the organised trade gilds.

The records of the city are by this time ample, and those who care to study them find, in what might appear at first to be somewhat monotonous details, glimpses of medieval life of fascinating interest. To take one example, it is mentioned in 1337 that London provided 200 archers for the fighting in Gascony, that the uniforms with which they were provided had red jackets, and that a tun of wine costing fifty shillings was provided as a send-off. In 1340, shortly before the victory over the French fleet at Sluys, in which London vessels played their part with some distinction, there had been so much fear of a naval descent upon the city that the bed of the river was obstructed with piles



and palisades were erected on the wharves.

The king's demands for money from the city were heavy and frequent; for example, in the year just mentioned, he required it to furnish £20,000 in one amount, but had to be content on this occasion with a quarter of the sum. Year after year this sort of requisition continued; on one occasion, in addition to money, twenty-six ships had to be provided for the transport of troops to Brittany. Then came the excitement of the news of Crécy, in which London archers took part. The purse strings of the city were on this occasion loosened to the extent of a gift to Edward amounting to 1,000 marks, and, in addition, there was a loan of double that sum. Plunder from the cities of France, taken during the prolonged campaigns, reached London in such quantities that there was a tendency among the women of the upper classes to adopt French fashions. The success of English arms in France and Scotland naturally produced feelings of great enthusiasm, and the country appears to have reached a high level of prosperity, when, in the autumn of 1348, a fresh outbreak of plague of terrible severity reached London. It had begun in the West Country in the previous midsummer, but the source of the Black Death, as it was called, was much further away, having apparently originated in

China in the previous year. How many perished in the city is not known, but there seems little doubt that much more than a third of the population succumbed. One of the many results of this terrible visitation was a sudden increase in wages, due to the scarcity of labour.

Owing to the prowess of the third Edward, Londoners began to see evidences of their military successes in the form of royal prisoners passing through the streets. In 1346 King David II. of Scotland was brought to London in captivity and, in the year following the Black Prince's remarkable victory of Poitiers, John II., King of France, rode into the city a prisoner. Never before had London experienced such a day as that when they witnessed the French monarch on a great white charger riding beside his captor on a modest black palfrey. In 1364 the mayor of London, Sir Henry Pickard, a vintner, had the unique experience of entertaining four kings. The mere fact that a simple merchant was capable of offering hospitality on such a scale throws light on the wealth of the city's merchant princes. The royal guests consisted of Edward III., David II. of Scotland, King John of France, and Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus. The banquet over, gaming followed, and the luck went against the King of Cyprus, who showed his annoyance to such an

extent that the mayor proposed to return to him what he had lost.

Those who know London well are familiar with a small thoroughfare known as Philpot Lane. This street preserves the name of the mayor, John Philipot, who should be remembered for his courage and enterprise at a time when the sea-borne commerce of London was suffering from the action of pirates, no effort being made by the royal government to put a stop to the menace. He created an independent fleet with which to police home waters, himself took command, and defeated Mercer, the Scottish pirate, who soon afterwards swung from a yard-arm.

Until this period London had had no experience of a black fog, but now there began to reach the city regular deliveries of what was then known as "sea-coal," and its smoke, heavily laden with carbon particles, began to drift over the roofs of the city, which hitherto had been free from the smut nuisance.

The latter years of Edward III.'s reign were somewhat gloomy; the king was old and worn out, Queen Philippa had died in 1371, and the Black Prince five years later. Power, as a consequence, fell into the hands of his brother, John of Gaunt, whose methods did not make him popular, and he actually went so far as to contemplate

the suppression of the mayoralty. These were the days of the reformer, John Wycliffe, and the steady growth of the heresy known as Lollardy. At the same time, Geoffrey Chaucer, in his house above Aldgate, was producing the poetry which throws such a clear light upon the manners and customs of all classes in the latter part of the fourteenth century.

It was about the year 1365 that William Langland, the poet, came to live in Cornhill, where he appears to have remained until his death, about 1400.

## VI

### THE LAST CENTURY OF MEDIEVAL LONDON

RICHARD II., the son of the Black Prince, inherited the Crown of England at the early age of eleven years. The kingdom was in a deplorable condition, due to strife within its frontiers and ill-success beyond them. Having promised friendship to the city, the boy king earned the nickname of "King of the Londoners." The unpopular John of Gaunt acted as Regent, and very soon there was a cleavage in the city between those who favoured the House of Lancaster and the partisans of that of York. William Walworth and John of Northampton were Lancastrians, and their opponents were John Philipot and Nicolas Brembre. All four held the mayoralty during the next few years.

There was much discontent owing to the very great weight of taxation throughout the country, and when the Poll Tax was imposed in 1380 revolts occurred which culminated in 1381 in a

march upon London from Kent, led by Wat Tyler. The insurgents occupied Southwark in June, and another body from Essex entered the city by Aldgate. The palatial residence of John of Gaunt, known as the Savoy, was set on fire, and very soon Wat Tyler became master of the city, three of the aldermen and large numbers of craftsmen joining the rebels who had encamped at Mile End. Richard was at this time fourteen years of age. He was in safety in the Tower with his advisers—Archbishop Sudbury, the chancellor, and Sir Robert Hailes, the royal treasurer—but it was decided that he should confer personally with the insurgents. The demands made were for the abolition of serfdom and feudal services, as well as other restrictions on the freedom of labour and trade. While the discussion was taking place, however, Wat Tyler and some of his followers made their way to the Tower and overcame the small guard which had been left there. The archbishop and Hailes were seized and decapitated on Tower Hill, their heads being set up on London Bridge, and from this moment bloodshed was rife. The king was obliged to seek safety in the Wardrobe by Baynard's Castle, and the chief men of the city set about organising the armed forces of the city. On the following day, on Smithfield, Richard once more faced the rebels. Tyler's be-

haviour was insolent, and he broke off the parley with an attempt to stab Walworth, the mayor, who, having a mail shirt under his outer garment, was not wounded, and himself struck at the rebel leader, who was shortly afterwards mortally wounded. The dagger said to have been used by Walworth is shown at the Fishmongers' Hall. Through Richard's remarkable courage and precociousness, the death of the leader at the conference resulted in a dispersal of the whole of the insurgents, and thus early in his reign the new king showed that he had inherited the courage of his father.

The struggle between the rival factions in the city resulted in the imprisonment of the ex-mayor, John of Northampton, who was not released until he had passed three years in captivity. Brembre, who succeeded him, met with a cruel fate, for, during the absence of John of Gaunt in Spain, Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, seized him as one of the supporters of the king, and caused him to be hanged. Fortunately for London the young king, a year later, attained his independence, and for eight years things were well ordered and peaceful conditions ensued. In time Richard was foolish enough to quarrel with London, and by arbitrary action lost the regard of its citizens. As a consequence, it is not surprising that Henry

of Lancaster found a warm welcome in the city.

The reign of Henry IV. is remarkable as the period when mediæval London reached its greatest heights of splendour, wealth, and independence. It was during these years that Richard Whittington, who had already been twice mayor, was exercising his powerful and pacific influence in the affairs of the city. He was mayor for the third time in 1406, and in the years that followed he applied his great wealth to a number of public-spirited enterprises, including the rebuilding of the church of St. Michael Paternoster, together with the hospital attached to it. In his time the rebuilding of the nave of Westminster Abbey was approaching completion, and to Whittington was entrusted the superintendence of the finance of this great work. In his will he left large sums towards the reconstruction of the hospital of St. Bartholomew, for the paving and glazing of the new Guildhall, which was built in his time, and is to a great extent standing to-day, and, in addition, provided it with a library. Very little has come to light in support of the popular legends concerning "Dick" Whittington, but one piece of evidence associates a member of his family (perhaps Richard himself) with a cat.

In 1401 the first statute against heretics was passed. It was the result of the interference of



Pope Boniface IX., who wished the mayor and corporation to put down with determination the form of heresy associated with Lollardy. As a consequence, medieval London began to witness the hideous sufferings of religious martyrs; the first to be burnt in Smithfield was Sir William Sautry, who had been a priest.

The fires of Smithfield, once lighted, burned intermittently for many years.

In 1414 London made a loan of 10,000 marks to Henry V. on the security of a gold collar and certain gems, followed by a similar amount secured by the customs. Provided with these means, the new king commenced that war with France which was prolonged for much more than a generation. On June 15 Henry, using the words "Christ save London!" bade farewell to his capital. Three months later the city had official news of the taking of Harfleur, and on October 28, after three black days of anxiety, news of Agincourt brought excitement and joy, the mayor going in procession to Westminster to give thanks to God. At the end of the following month, on a Saturday morning, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen rode out of the city to meet the victorious king on Blackheath. London at the height of its medieval splendour could do justice to such an occasion, and the pomp and colour of that victo-

rious return has probably never been surpassed in England.

The city was still suffering from bad sanitation, although progress had been made in draining, cleaning, and paving. It was at this time that the marsh known as Moorfields was first drained. One reads at intervals of efforts being made to improve the water supply, and the construction of conduits at different times gave a more ample supply of water to the different wards of the city.

Whittington had rebuilt Newgate prison, which had been such a horrible den that those consigned to it were almost condemned to death. Another place of imprisonment was Ludgate, and outside the walls, surrounded by a very foul ditch fed by the Fleet River, was the famous Fleet prison. It is recorded that in 1355 the moat was choked with sewage and an epidemic was playing havoc with the prisoners. In addition, there were the minor prisons, or lock-ups; one of the most famous of these was the great barrel-shaped Tun on Cornhill, built in 1282. It was used chiefly as a temporary place of detention for thieves and other disreputable folk. The sheriffs, too, had their compters.

By this time London was looking after its internal affairs with greater and greater attention

to detail, and it was undoubtedly becoming more and more a well-ordered and well-governed city.

After the death of Henry V., throughout the remaining sixty or more years of the medieval period, London pursued its many enterprises, handicapped at first by the continuance of the war with France, and, subsequently, by the civil war known as the Wars of the Roses. The prominent figures in the Government were the late king's brothers John, Duke of Bedford, the Regent appointed to govern on behalf of the infant King Henry VI., and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. The Regent was absent with the army in France, and Humphrey therefore assumed a powerful position in England. His affability won him the greatest popularity in London, where he became known as the "Good Duke Humphrey." The lack of a controlling hand over affairs of state brought the inevitable quarrels between the great lords. London sided with Humphrey of Gloucester, who lived in semi-regal state in his palace on the river front close to the site of Baynard's Castle.

At the end of four years the beginning of civil war showed itself in the strained relations between Duke Humphrey and Bishop Henry of Beaufort, who was head of the Royal Council. Eventually the latter assumed an attitude of hostility in the Tower, and the Londoners, led by

the mayor, supported Humphrey. Blood was shed, and the Regent was obliged to hurry home from France. Matters were settled by the retirement of the Bishop to the Continent, where the Pope gave him a cardinal's hat. It is curious to read how the city presented to Duke John on this occasion 1,000 marks in two silver-gilt bowls, and how they complained that they "hadde but lytylle thanks." What did they expect?

In 1429 Henry VI. was approaching eight years of age and he was deemed old enough for coronation. The ceremony was therefore performed with great brilliance at Westminster on November 6. Pageantry and religious ceremonial could not, however, avert the evil days which were about to fall upon the country. Joan of Arc had begun her successful efforts to drive the English out of France.

A disastrous gale swept over London in 1439 and, among other damage caused, the wind broke down much of the Tun in Cornhill so that the street was blocked with its timbers. Owing to a bad harvest the prices of wheat and rye rose enormously and many were obliged to subsist on beans and peas. But, despite the prevailing miseries, there was a two-day tournament at the Tower. The burning of heretics still continued.

By 1441 the young king had reached the age

of twenty, but it was clear that he was deficient in all the qualities required for a successful holder of the Crown. This fact, and the improbability that Henry would marry or have a son, created ambitious ideas in the mind of Duke Humphrey's beautiful wife Eleanor, in view of the fact that she was wedded to the King's next-of-kin. She appears to have spoken unguardedly on the matter and to have taken part in certain secret attempts to discover by magic the date of Henry's death. The Duchess was tried and found guilty, her husband doing nothing to protect her. As a consequence, the beautiful woman was sentenced to perform a penance in London on three successive days and pass the rest of her life as a prisoner. Wrapped in a white sheet, bare-headed and barefooted and holding a heavy candle in her hand, this delicately nurtured woman was required to walk a considerable distance on the roughly paved streets of London in the cold of November.

Duke Humphrey had advocated the continuance of the hopeless war with France in opposition to the wiser councils of Cardinal Beaufort, and after the public degradation of his wife he found himself compelled to retire, leaving the Cardinal in chief authority. In connection with the truce made with France in 1444, it was arranged that Henry should marry Marguerite of Anjou, who

arrived in London in the spring of the following year. On a May morning the royal bride of fifteen years on reaching Blackheath found the mayor and a great array of the notables of the city ready to escort her through the gaily decorated streets. On the last day of the month she was crowned at Westminster. Two years later Duke Humphrey died, to be followed in a few weeks by Beaufort.

Matters were going from bad to worse in France, and by 1450 there only remained Calais of all the Norman possessions of England. In the same year came the insurrection of Jack Cade, who brought a large force from Kent and threatened London from Blackheath. After defeating the royal force sent to disperse them, the rebels entered Southwark while another body of insurgents reached the capital from Essex. The city authorities and the Royal Council were thoroughly alarmed, and efforts were made to meet the demands of the rebels, but a day or two later they managed to cross London Bridge and press still more directly upon the city corporation. The unpopular treasurer was brought from the Tower and beheaded in Cheapside. Murder was the order of the day, and soon the plundering of houses became general. This was too much for the citizens of London; train-bands were mobilised and

a fierce battle was fought in the streets leading to the Bridge and on that structure itself. Night fell but the struggle went on, the unfortunate owners of houses on the Bridge having their property much damaged by fire and other causes as the fighting surged to and fro in the narrow way. By 9 a.m. the Londoners had driven the rebels back to Southwark and, on the promise of a general pardon, Cade saw his forces break up with such rapidity that he was obliged to retreat into Sussex. There was a fatal engagement at Heathfield, and soon the heads of the leader and twenty-three others formed a terrifying array on the poles over the gate of the Bridge.

The moves of the leaders of the rival factions during the Wars of the Roses had varying effects upon London, but it is not possible to follow them here. Such a scene as that which occurred in 1451 when Richard, Duke of York, was led a semi-prisoner through London, and on the altar of St. Paul's was obliged to swear allegiance, is typical of some of the happenings of this troubled period.

The financial resources of the city had been much depleted on account of the enormous drain upon them caused by the disastrous war with France when England was gradually being forced from her last possessions on the Continent. London had great difficulty in keeping the peace within

its walls, for no lord of either faction thought himself safe in the city unless he had a great force of armed men with him. It was not uncommon for any one of them to have from 400 to 800 retainers, and, as a consequence, the city authorities deemed it advisable that as many as 5,000 citizens and soldiers should be kept under arms. There were years of frequent alarm, much suspense, and intermittent bloodshed and murder in the city. If the normal life went on fairly regularly, and trade was continued, there can be little doubt that the difficulties caused by the struggle between the followers of the Red and White Roses made life hazardous on many occasions. By 1460 the city had abandoned its loyalty to Henry and opened its gates to the rebel Yorkist earls, with the result that in the following year London was threatened by Queen Margaret's army of Northerners, possibly numbering about 12,000. The gates were promptly closed, and after a few skirmishes outside the walls the Lancastrian army, which had come southwards with high hopes and was now in a half-starved condition, withdrew from the formidable city, not daring to make an assault. This was the last effort on the part of the king's supporters, for a few days later Edward, Earl of March, was welcomed by the Londoners. In St. John's Fields a great concourse of armed



men and citizens declared that Henry VI. was unfitted to govern any longer, and Edward was accepted as King in his stead.

It was not until after the decisive Battle of Towton that the new sovereign was crowned in Westminster Abbey as Edward IV. Although only nineteen years of age, the handsome young king had no hesitation in securing himself against the House of Lancaster by a series of executions on Tower Hill, but when the semi-imbecile ex-king fell into his hands in 1465 he was placed in the Tower and looked after with kindness. There, however, he was not allowed to remain, for in 1470 Warwick "the Kingmaker" entered London during Edward's absence; poor Henry was taken from his place of confinement to the Bishop of London's palace, and Warwick became Regent. In the following year, however, the situation was again reversed. Again Edward was king in his own capital, and Henry found himself once more in the grim embrace of the Tower, whose massive walls had by this time accumulated a vast perspective of tragic happenings and long-sustained human misery.

There followed a remarkable scene of warfare in the Pool, more resembling the period of the Danish invasions than anything which had occurred in the five hundred years since those days

of red struggle. Edward had led his army to the West to deal with the Lancastrians, who were still devotedly fighting for Margaret and the imprisoned Henry. This gave an opportunity for Thomas Fauconberg, otherwise known as the Bastard of Falconbridge, who held the post of Vice-Admiral in the Channel, to bring a fleet to London and get in a blow during Edward's absence. The men of Kent and Essex also rose in support of the deposed king, but Fauconberg, on asking permission to take his followers through the city, met with a firm refusal from the mayor and aldermen. The insurgents, therefore, entered unprotected Southwark, and the fleet opened fire on the bridge and the river front of London between it and the Tower. There was also a demonstration on the eastern side of the city. On May 12, 1471, the assault on the bridge began, but it was so stoutly defended that the rebels withdrew. This was on a Sunday. On the Tuesday there was a general attack. The defence of the bridge was in the hands of Alderman Sir Ralph Josselyn, while Urswyk, the Recorder, commanded the forces on the wall. The fighting was fierce and the casualties numerous. Both sides used artillery, and sixty houses on the bridge were burnt. The defenders eventually drove off the rebels and then, emerging from the gates, com-

pelled them to retreat. Before long the Bastard's head was secured and placed on the bridge. A week later Edward re-entered London, and on the following day it became known that Henry VI. was dead. It was believed that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother, had caused the murder of the unfortunate and half-witted man. The remains of the ex-king lay in state in St. Paul's before burial at Chertsey Abbey.

The latter part of Edward's reign saw a successful but bloodless invasion of France. Louis XI. bought peace with a large sum and a promise of £10,000 per annum during his lifetime. London's citizens, who had advanced large sums for this enterprise, were vastly relieved to be paid back promptly from the cash with which the king returned. But of far greater importance than this financial advantage was the setting up at Westminster in 1477 of William Caxton's first printing press. Royal interest was displayed in the new invention, and a stream of printed books flowed from the hard-worked press at the Sign of the Red Pale close to Westminster Abbey. It was also at this time that the city walls were extensively repaired or rebuilt for the last time. The mayor responsible for this enterprise was Josselyn who, as alderman, had conducted the defence of London Bridge a few years earlier. Each of

the city companies undertook a length of the wall and there was a tax to provide funds.

The two years following the death of Edward IV. were eventful for London, more in regard to the Crown than the affairs of the city. There was a stately entry into the capital on May 4, 1483, when the new king, Edward IV.'s elder son, a boy of twelve years, rode through the streets clad in blue velvet, while Richard, Duke of Gloucester, soon to become Protector, was habited in severe black. Seven weeks later Dr. Shaw preached from Paul's Cross to the effect that the new king and his brother were illegitimate, a charge which could not be brought against Richard, who was, therefore, declared to be the rightful heir to the throne. The Londoners were inclined, however, towards the young king and only very half-heartedly did they assent to his deposition and the acceptance of Richard in his place.

The coronation of Richard III. took place in Westminster Abbey on July 6, and his two little nephews soon afterwards came to an untimely end in the Tower. There seems scarcely any doubt that this horrible deed was carried out by order of their uncle. It is a melancholy fact that this period of London's history, when life was enriched with colour and ornament and when Gothic architecture had reached its wonderful fruition in the splendours of the Perpendicular

style, should have been sustained with so many callous political murders. There is no doubt that the last phase of the medieval period was in many of its aspects the darkest hour before the dawn, and it is typical of the bloodshed and disorder which marked the passing of the age of the great warring baronial families that the last king of medieval England should meet his death in civil war. The death of Richard III. on the field of Bosworth and the entry into London of Henry VII. on August 27, 1485, marks the emergence of the city into the new age when her ancient walls were to fall into decay through becoming a useless restriction on her growth.

The population of Saxon London may never have exceeded 20,000 and was possibly for a long while much less. From the Norman period the figures grew by the reign of Richard I. to about 40,000. After that the increase was very slow on account of pestilences and infant mortality, and it has been estimated that by the reign of Henry VII. the figures were still in the neighbourhood of 50,000. Dr. Creighton's estimates, based on Bills of Mortality, show a rapid increase of population in the sixteenth century, giving 62,400 in Henry VIII.'s reign and 152,478 in 1595. This trebling of the total in a century was due to peaceful conditions and expansion into suburbs outside the walls.

## VII

### IN THE TUDOR PERIOD

THE earliest drawing of London known to exist belongs probably to the reign of Henry VII. It is a very fine and detailed piece of illumination in a manuscript volume of the poems of Charles, Duke of Orleans, and shows the Tower in the foreground, the Customs House and the bridge in the middle distance, with the spires and towers of the churches rising from the crowded mass of roofs beyond.

At this period, in spite of the danger of living outside the solid walls of the city, there were suburbs in all directions. South of the Thames was Southwark, the oldest of them all, dating back to the age of Rome. Up the river lay Westminster, with its royal palace, its monastery, the noble abbey church and the houses of the township clustered round it. Originally quite detached from London, Westminster was at this time joined by the long-curving line of great houses following the bank of the Thames from Temple Bar to

the foot of the slope from Charing Cross. Temple Bar began as a mere barrier of posts and chains; it is first mentioned as a gateway in 1533. The old suburb to the west of the Fleet River was a fairly compact mass of buildings and gardens formed by the White Friars Monastery, the Temple, and the houses on both sides of Fleet Street. The slope towards the Fleet between Ludgate and the Thames had been included in the city area through an extension of the walls, the Roman defence (in this sector its position is uncertain) having been removed and a new wall built to give more room for the great house of the Black Friars. On the other side of Ludgate Hill stood the Fleet Prison, and north of that, just beyond Newgate, was Smithfield, with the Augustinian House of St. Bartholomew and its hospital occupying the angle formed by the inward bend of the city walls at this point. To what extent domestic dwellings had grown up in this north-western suburb at the beginning of the fifteenth century is not known. Outside Bishopsgate stood the Bethlehem Hospital, and to the east of the Tower were the hospitals of St. Mary of Graces and St. Katherine. The memory of the last is preserved on its old site by the dock of that name.

Seventy-five years later the expansion beyond the walls is clearly shown in a most remarkable

bird's-eye view of the city published by Braun and Hogenberg about 1560. This drawing shows London connected with Westminster by a continuous street—the Strand; it indicates Holborn lined with houses and almost joined with St. Giles-in-the-Fields; Gray's Inn Road has been built up on its eastern side, and all about Clerkenwell and St. Giles's, Cripplegate, there is a network of streets and houses. The road to the north from Bishopsgate has become hemmed in with houses for nearly half a mile, and scattered dwellings in large gardens appear outside Aldgate; Southwark, too, shows great extensions along the river in both directions. The growth in the west after this stage was for some time mainly northwards from Charing Cross and Holborn; the development to St. James's Palace and up to Piccadilly came after the Tudor period.

That Londoners should have shown considerable hesitation to live outside the walls of their city for some time after the Wars of the Roses had terminated is not surprising, for in 1497 came the rebellion of Perkin Warbeck and the encamping of the rebels on Blackheath, followed, in 1554, by the anxious time when Sir Thomas Wyatt led his 10,000 Kentishmen to Southwark and made an unsuccessful attempt to gain admittance into the city.



Henry VII.'s reign began with a disastrous outbreak of a disease known as the Sweating Sickness. Two of London's mayors were among its victims. It came suddenly and caused great mortality, those attacked often dying within two or three hours; if able to survive twenty-four hours the patient was considered safe. In 1507 the epidemic broke out again, to be followed ten years later with a still more fatal recurrence, repeated a fourth time in 1528 when Henry VIII. broke up the Court and left London hurriedly. This disease was quite unlike the plague, for it attacked the wealthy and those who were free livers rather than the poor. That it was due to the terribly insanitary condition of London and other English towns there seems to be little doubt.

Apart from this visitation, Henry VII.'s occupancy of the throne was destined to be a period of peace and progress, during which the city was quite ready to support the royal demands for loans, the new king, unlike the Plantagenets, being regular in his repayments. And now the thoughts of London's merchant princes were beginning to turn to wider fields of enterprise than trade with Western Europe. The Atlantic had been crossed in 1492, and soon afterwards John Cabot, the discoverer of North America who settled in London in 1484, aroused intense interest

and received considerable financial support in his project of discovering a westward route to Asia and the Indies. His son Sebastian founded the Company of Merchant Adventurers and was made its governor for life. The Russia Company also came into existence at this time in connection with the new trade opened up with that country. There followed the Turkey Company, the Guinea Company, and the East India Company, all of which were the means of promoting the enterprise of London merchants and the investment of much capital in a far more profitable direction than the subsidising of military adventure in France.

London was growing rapidly in population, it was overflowing its medieval walls and its chief citizens were greatly increasing their wealth and resources, but with the coming of Henry VIII. to the throne the importance of the city in the councils of the State was to be diminished. The severance of the Church of England from the control of Rome was followed by the suppression of the monasteries and the transference of their vast wealth to the Crown. Henry became financially independent of London, and his intense love of power caused him to take steps to make himself master of the capital. The taxation of the whole country was carried out very drastically, but it was Parliament and not London which had

power in regard to the imposition of taxes. Thus the citizens of the capital learnt that they must regard themselves as Englishmen first and Londoners afterwards, and they thought it wise to accept a good deal of interference from Henry VIII. which would not have been tolerated for one moment from his predecessors. There were a number of instances when the ancient rights of the city were disregarded. The king would indicate a wealthy merchant as the most suitable person to be mayor or he would oppose the election of someone to whom he objected. In 1537 he thrust Sir Richard Gresham into the mayoralty, and on another occasion, when a gentleman of the royal household was placed under arrest in the city for debt and a formal demand for his release had been rejected, the city sheriff and serjeants were imprisoned in the Tower. It was only through the efforts of the mayor and aldermen, who assumed a most humble attitude, that their officials were liberated. Wolsey, Henry's arrogant minister, earned great unpopularity in the city through his exactions, and on one occasion, when requiring a benevolence or forced loan, met with a refusal. The great Cardinal had to accept the fact that to enforce his demand would be illegal and that the commons of London would oppose any such attempt even if the

mayor and aldermen were willing to urge it.

The change wrought in London through the suppression of the monasteries was remarkable. A very large proportion of the area within the walls was occupied by the religious houses. The Grey, the Black, and the Austin Friars alone covered several acres of ground, and, in addition, there were Holy Trinity, Aldgate, the Friars of the Sack, the Crutched Friars, and the Nunnery of St. Helen, Bishopsgate. Outside the walls were the White Friars, the Priories of St. Bartholomew and of St. John, and the Abbey of St. Mary of Graces. Besides all these regular monasteries there were the hospitals with lesser communities attached. These were, with one or two exceptions, outside the walls. It does not require a very intimate knowledge of the condition of England in the Middle Ages to realise something of the serious disturbance in a large section of London's daily life caused by the sudden cessation of the activities of the religious houses on which the indigent, the sick, and the old had leaned for centuries. The gap in the social services had to be filled somehow, and it was due to private generosity in some cases, and to the city as a whole in others, that some of the monastic hospitals were reopened after a few years as lay institutions. Henry himself refounded Rahere's hospital of St.

Bartholomew, as all may read upon its gateway to-day.

During the reign of Edward VI. the Reformation was advanced a stage further by the publication of the "First Book of Common Prayer," and the churches of London were to a great extent stripped of their statuary, carved woodwork, stained glass, and pictures, all of which were regarded as idolatrous by the Protestants. Bonner, the Bishop of London, was placed in confinement for his opposition to the Protector Somerset's efforts in this direction.

The frail young king died in 1553, and without loss of time the Duke of Northumberland had his daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, a charming girl of seventeen years, proclaimed queen in London. The citizens, however, favoured the Princess Mary and, thirteen days later, the unfortunate young queen and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, were sent to the Tower. There they were separated, Jane being placed in the Gentleman Gaoler's Lodging and her husband in the Beauchamp Tower. During his captivity he carved on a wall the single word "Jane." This pathetic reminder of a hideous State crime may still be seen. A few months later the two prisoners were taken to the Guildhall to be tried for high treason. They were preceded by the Gentleman Gaoler carrying an

axe, and after him came Archbishop Cranmer. The mayor presided over the trial, the High Sheriff being the Duke of Norfolk. The prisoners pleaded guilty and were sentenced to death. Possibly Mary might have intended to spare the young ex-queen, but the situation was altered by Wyatt's dangerous rebellion, to which reference has already been made, and she and her husband were ordered to be executed on Tower Hill. It was later decided that it might be dangerous for one so young and beautiful to be despatched in public, and, as a consequence, the savage order was carried out on Tower Green within the fortress. The almost incredible barbarity of bringing into the Tower the decapitated body of the husband, so that poor Lady Jane could see it from her window before being herself taken to the block, is typical of the strangely callous state of society in Tudor times. Jane died stoutly adhering to her Protestantism, and pardoned her executioner when he knelt and prayed her forgiveness.

Soon the gateway of London Bridge was to bristle with a gruesome array of heads, for wholesale executions heralded the beginning of Mary's reign. The conflict with the adherents of the Roman faith became intense, and Smithfield's fires were kindled once more for the burning of obstinate heretics. Fortunately, this period of ac-

centuated bitterness was brief. Mary died in 1558 and eleven days later Princess Elizabeth became Queen. She was brought from Hatfield to the Tower, where she had already tasted something of the terrors of life as a State prisoner.

Londoners gave the young queen an enthusiastic welcome, which would have been still more hearty had they known that in the coming half-century their city was destined to experience a period of prosperity and growth unequalled by anything that had preceded it. During this reign London became a formidable rival to Antwerp as the chief port of Western Europe, and the population much more than doubled itself, rising from about 90,000 in 1558 to about 188,000 in 1601. Could there be any more concrete evidence of the beneficial effects of the coming of the "spacious days" of Elizabeth? Alas, this spaciousness did not lead to any serious improvement in sanitary matters, and the frequent recurrences of plagues were so alarming that people often hesitated to assemble in numbers for fear of infection.

The silhouette of London was changed in 1561 by the destruction of the spire of St. Paul's by lightning. It is indicative of the lack of funds in the church at this time that it was never replaced. Five years later the foundations of the first Royal Exchange were laid, an enterprise due

to the energy of Sir Thomas Gresham. It was originally called the "Bourse," but was given by Elizabeth the name which it has borne ever since.

Notwithstanding the amount of shipping which entered the Port of London, there were no docks at this time nor was the first built until 1695, and that was only used for repairing and fitting vessels. Until 1800 there were no cargo docks, and ships when loading or discharging were either moored in the creeks or to the wharves or anchored off them. The larger craft are shown in Braun and Hogenberg's picture map grouped just below the Tower.

It was shortly before the reign of Elizabeth that Wyngærde made his remarkable bird's-eye view of the whole city in which the London of about 1550 is recorded with a wonderful wealth of detail. In addition, there are two other maps of a slightly later date, one known as Agas's and the other by Norden, dated 1593. By means of these "picture" maps one can see details of the heavily burdened old Bridge as it appeared at this time with its load of wooden houses held together with beams across the roadway. The ornate addition known as Nonsuch House came a little later.

In the age of Elizabeth London was remarkable for the many famous men who lived and worked in it, if they were, like Shakespeare, not natives



of the city. The greatest name among the wealthy merchants of this period is undoubtedly that of Sir Thomas Gresham, whose tomb survives to-day in the church of St. Helen, Bishopsgate.

Southwark continued to be a suburb of mixed reputation, for besides possessing the town houses of some of the bishops it was notorious for its "stews," one of which bore the sign "The Cardinal's Hat," and on Bankside was built at this time the "Rose" theatre, famous as the house in which the company included not only such men as Marlowe and Alleyn, but also William Shakespeare.

London was having many dignified buildings added to it in this period. The Renaissance did not at once destroy the sense of beauty in architecture, as may be seen in the halls of the Inns of Court, two of which belong to this age. Internal woodwork, under the stimulus of Flemish craftsmen, was becoming more and more beautiful. Unfortunately, a large proportion of the buildings erected at this time were destroyed in the Great Fire.

The city authorities were at peace with the strong and immensely popular Sovereign who, when she required their aid, would at times be given double what she asked for. If Elizabeth were determined to keep the city very much in

its place, she saw the wisdom of respecting its ancient rights and privileges, and London, with its almost complete monopoly of foreign trade, increased its wealth steadily.

## VIII

### LONDON IN STUART TIMES

IN the century following the Elizabethan period the city saw greater changes than had taken place since Norman times, and when the reign of Queen Anne came to its close the London of our own times was rapidly emerging from its medieval husk. Throughout the first quarter of the new century the influence of the Elizabethan age was still a force not quite spent, and if James I. irritated the city authorities by his lack of understanding of the fact that the sovereign must act within the law, he did not go to such lengths as to force the mayor and corporation into open hostility. One of the most remarkable enterprises of the city companies in this reign was the financial backing they gave to the scheme of forming a Protestant plantation in Ulster. The city, as a consequence, became owner of great tracts of land in Northern Ireland, and the town of Derry was named Londonderry. The Irish Society—a committee appointed by the corporation to

deal with this new colony—is still in existence.

Charles I., with his amazing incapacity to appreciate the limitations of a constitutional sovereign, plunged into such a course of illegalities that the ancient habit of loyalty of London was strained to the breaking-point. After prolonged efforts to avoid the disaster of civil war, the capital was at last compelled to throw in its great power and influence with Parliament, thereby, no doubt, sealing the King's fate. There came a remarkable scene on January 4, 1642, when Charles proceeded to the Guildhall and demanded the surrender of the five members of Parliament (the leaders of the Malcontents) whose opposition to his arbitrary proceedings had made it necessary for them to seek refuge within the city walls, where the London militia made ready to protect them. The king had gone to the House of Commons with a body of armed men, but observing the absence of the five members he wished to secure remarked, "I see the birds are flown." He was again foiled of his purpose at the Guildhall, where the mayor and corporation stoutly refused to deliver up the leaders. Thereat the strangely inept king could see no way out of the *impasse* save war. He left London to prepare for the struggle, and in August of the same year civil war began—157 years after the Wars of the Roses had ended at Bosworth.

Charles's army, having been put into shape, moved westwards in September, and after the drawn battle at Edgehill advanced towards the capital. London, however, had not been idle. It had called out its train-bands, 20,000 strong, and had thrown up earthworks studded with star-shaped redoubts and batteries, which completely engirdled the suburbs of the city. One of the forts was at Hyde Park Corner, another in the Oxford Road where Wardour Street joins it, and so on at irregular intervals on both sides of the river. In the previous year the Puritans had been nicknamed Roundheads by the Royalists on account of the habit of the London apprentices of cutting their hair closely. Calling them by this name, the Cavaliers jeered at the citizens (they were of all ranks and ages and of both sexes) as they toiled at the digging of the earthen defences. There was a big encampment formed at Turnham Green, where the Royalist army found the forces of the Parliament awaiting the assault, Charles hesitated to give the order to attack, and, finally, to the immense relief of the Londoners, withdrew to Oxford. The capital was never again seriously threatened by the Royalists, and seven years later, on a gloomy day in January, the untrustworthy king, who by the law of atavism seemed to have inherited the habits of mind of an Angevin

sovereign, met his end on a scaffold erected outside the banqueting-hall of Whitehall Palace. Londoners of to-day can see the beautiful building from which, through a window, Charles passed to make his speech to the crowd and then face the headsman's axe with perfect composure.

Throughout the years of the Commonwealth London was loyal to the new form of government, and yet its upper classes had no great love for the Protector or the Commonwealth, being quite ready in 1660 to accept Charles II., thinking, no doubt, that royalty had been taught a sufficiently severe lesson to make any chance of a repetition of the late king's unconstitutional actions unlikely.

The age of the Restoration in London lives in the pages of Pepys' *Diary*, wherein everyday life and behind-the-scenes aspects of affairs of State are pictured so vividly that one looks at the city of those days without any mist obscuring the view. From his entries one learns of the tragic intensity of the Great Plague of 1665, how the deaths from it reached over 7,000 and possibly as many as 10,000 in a single week, and how day and night there were few sounds but the tolling of bells. So paralysing was the grip of the disease that business came almost to a standstill and grass grew in some of the chief streets. To the Puritans this disaster was a punishment for the plunge into every

form of extravagance and shameless immorality which society had taken with the re-establishment of the monarchy. Charles II. set an example of vicious living which the Court and the upper classes imitated until the country had swung from the narrow and rigidly moral life of the Puritans to everything that was foolish and indecent. The city had had no time to recover from the plague when it met with another disaster in the form of one of the most destructive fires it had ever experienced. By far the larger part of the walled area was destroyed by a whirling and roaring mass of flame. With the exception of the Tower and a few churches and public buildings on the eastern side of the city the chief edifices of London were reduced to ashes or, at the best, calcined stone. Pepys' *Diary* again gives one a most vivid picture of this fiery ordeal and the disorganising of public life which it entailed. Within four days the greatest part of the medieval architecture of the city was wiped out.

Although St. Paul's was too solid to disappear, it was so calcined that it was found impossible to save any part of the magnificent pile, and a new cathedral, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, rose on the site of its Gothic and Romanesque predecessor. Although begun soon after the Great Fire, the new structure was not completed until the

reign of Queen Anne. Most of the churches were destroyed by the fire, but, fortunately, not all. The Guildhall had its roofs burnt, but its walls are to a great extent, like the hall of the Merchant Taylors, standing to-day. Londoners had hardly begun to recover from the shock of this fearful double disaster when, in the June of the following year, the sound of distant cannonading reached their ears, announcing the arrival of the Dutch fleet in the Medway and the inability of the British Navy to defend the shores of England.

In 1684 the famous action of *quo warranto* was taken against the Corporation, and, by order of the King's Bench, the charter and franchises of the city were forfeited to the Crown.

In the winter of 1683-1684 there was such a prolonged period of low temperatures that the Thames was very solidly frozen for some weeks and a Frost Fair was held upon the ice. A year later, as a result of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a large number of industrious French Protestants came over to England and a number settled at Spitalfields, a north-eastern suburb, where they established a thriving silk industry.

In the reign of James II. London found that years of misgovernment had had a very adverse effect upon her prosperity, but 1688 was a notable



one for the city, for in that year the king restored the Charter of London in the hope of having the capital on his side. This did not, however, prevent it from sending a warm welcome to William of Orange. Under that wise king, London found herself free from interference by Parliament, and from that time onwards has been left to enjoy her hard-won privileges.

London was by this time a smoky city. It was not a pleasant place for William on account of the asthma from which he suffered, and after the burning of Whitehall Palace in 1691, he went out as far as Kensington in search for a home.

During the reign of Anne the streets of London, largely rebuilt after the Great Fire, began to assume in some degree the plain and formal aspect which they were to preserve to our own time. While there are actually few private houses still standing which go back so far, there are many churches and public buildings which were begun or completed in her reign, and not the least among them was the wonderful domed mass of St. Paul's.

## IX

### GEORGIAN LONDON

IN 1700 the population of London is given as 550,000, and by 1737 the total had grown to over 725,000, and it is a notable fact that sometime about 1687 the inhabitants of London had become more numerous than those of Paris and Rome together. From this time onward the population within the walls was decreasing rapidly, for in 1700 there had been 139,300, and fifty years later there were only 87,000. The villages close to the metropolis were beginning one by one to be absorbed in the spreading suburbs. Hoxton had become joined to the eastern growth by 1741, and at the same date the fields had been encroached upon to the west as far as Mary-le-Bone. Chelsea at this time was still separated by the fields upon which Belgravia was to be laid out in the following century. Down the river, Rotherhithe had become one with the extension of Southwark, and Stepney was becoming joined to Wapping and Shadwell. At the same time the growth of the

fashionable district of Mayfair had passed Oxford Street and had extended to Portman Square, beyond which was open country. North of Montagu House (now the British Museum) lay Lamb's Conduit Fields, and a little to the north-east stood the Foundling Hospital, separated from the New River Head by the Fleet River, which is now hidden beneath the ground.

Until 1738 there was still only one bridge over the Thames. In that year a second one was commenced at Westminster, which took twelve years in building, being open for traffic in November, 1750. The architect was a Swiss named Labelye. The structure began to show signs of collapse in 1846, and the existing bridge was begun eight years later. It is nearly double the width of its predecessor. The spanning of the river at a third place was begun at Blackfriars in 1761 and completed in eight years, the architect in this case being a Scotsman named Mylne. Having two new bridges before their eyes, Londoners began to realise that the famous achievement of Peter de Colechurch, widened, patched, partially rebuilt, and still covered with houses, required serious attention. The question of removing the superstructures was mooted, but the annual income from them amounted to £1,300, which was not lightly to be thrown away, and Dance, the City

Surveyor, estimated that £30,000 would be required to carry out the necessary repairs. Action was therefore postponed, but in 1757 and the following year the famous old bridge was shorn of its houses. This loss of picturesqueness was typical of the process at work all over the city. When rebuilding took place the frontages were, as a rule, of plain brickwork, relieved only by the care taken to make an attractive entrance. For public buildings it was usual to employ Portland stone and to adhere more and more rigidly to the purest of the classic styles of architecture.

Ever since 1613 a copious supply of water had been available to the rapidly expanding city by means of the New River, a canal which had been constructed through the enterprise of Sir Hugh Myddelton, a wealthy citizen, from springs near Ware in Hertfordshire, a distance of nearly thirty-nine miles owing to the circuitous course necessary. By the end of the eighteenth century the New River Company was obliged to seek other sources of supply, so great were the demands made upon it. During the Great Fire a very large number of the wells and pumps used by the inhabitants were so choked up that they were abandoned. A few, however, were kept in use, including the Aldgate Pump, which was believed to supply very pure water until the cholera

epidemic in 1848, when those who drank of it died.

London was in the Georgian period still a city of many signs, every street possessing a very great variety. Not only did the taverns have their signs, but there were also those of the bankers, the book-sellers, the goldsmiths, the druggists, the tobaccoists, the watchmakers, the haberdashers, and a variety of others. It was in the Georgian age that the coffee house greatly flourished, and at the same time many of the more important clubs still in existence were founded in chocolate houses. The two most notable of the latter are White's and Arthur's. Gambling for high stakes was the order of the day in these exclusive clubs, to which no one could belong unless possessed of considerable wealth and belonging to a family of distinction. Duelling was common throughout this period. The meetings took place almost anywhere from Hyde Park to the fields behind Montagu House. Even the clergy would take part in these contests, and when one of them killed his opponent he received no reprimand from ecclesiastical authority!

The amusements of Londoners were numerous, for besides the many resorts for gaming, there were the gardens of Vauxhall, which dated from the early years of the Restoration, Ranelagh Gardens, others at Marylebone, and yet another resort

at Sadler's Wells, where the entertainments were inexpensive and attracted those whose purses were light. The theatres included the Little Theatre and the King's in the Haymarket, Covent Garden Theatre, transferred from Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1733, and the famous house in Drury Lane. By the close of the Georgian period several other theatres for different classes of audience had sprung up.

An event which disturbed the peacefulness of London's life in the eighteenth century was the advance of the Pretender's forces towards the capital in the rising of '45. So great was the fear of what might happen that there was a run on the Bank of England, and George II.'s 5,000 regular troops encamped at Finchley were reinforced by an equal number of militia and volunteers. The Pretender could not, however, persuade his supporters to advance beyond Derby, and London's alarmists looked foolish when the news of the retreat of the Scottish rebels was reported.

In 1780 occurred the anti-Catholic riots, led by the eccentric Lord George Gordon, when a mob so completely gained the upper hand in the city that the mayor and corporation merely looked on helplessly while Roman Catholic chapels and the houses of unpopular politicians were burnt, and

drunken orgies, followed by an attack on Newgate prison, proceeded without any serious attempt to stop the riot by force. At last George III. thought that the situation justified the use of armed soldiers, and in a twinkling the mobs dispersed and fled and Gordon was taken and tried. It was one of the strangest examples of ineptitude on the part of the city authorities which is recorded in history.

The first few years of the nineteenth century witnessed great energy in the Port of London. The West India Dock, surrounded by a great wall to prevent theft, was built in 1800; the London Docks followed in 1805, and soon afterwards the East India Dock was in operation. These great constructional works took place during the Napoleonic Wars.

At the very end of the Georgian period came the destruction of Old London Bridge. It had been greatly weakened by the scour of the tides under the large opening made in its centre by the throwing of two arches into one, and, finally, it was condemned as too weak to justify repair. In 1832 the new bridge, built a little higher up stream, was opened by William IV., and then, slowly and reluctantly, the old structure allowed itself to be broken up.

## X

### IN THE VICTORIAN AGE

ALTHOUGH less than a century has passed since Queen Victoria ascended the throne, in that time London has changed more remarkably than in any preceding period. In 1837 there were still many merchants who were only just breaking away from the time-honoured custom of living over their places of business and deciding to live in the new suburbs which were rapidly forming within a radius of half a dozen miles. At that time the night population of the city was about 125,000, whereas now the number has dropped to about one tenth of that total. On the other hand, the county area, where the Londoners sleep, has jumped up from 1,200,000 to 4,500,000, and, according to some calculations, the figure is still greater.

The lighting of the London streets with gas had been completed in 1823, and this new form of illumination was slowly finding its way into offices and private houses, but far into the Vic-



torian period oil-lamps, candles, and, among the poor, rush-lights were in use. Omnibuses had been plying in the London streets since 1829, but it was twenty years later before outside seats were introduced. The Hansom cab, invented by a Birmingham man of that name, appeared in 1834, and gradually the old-fashioned heavy coach and all the chaises and other light vehicles formerly on hire disappeared, leaving the omnibus, the Hansom, and the four-wheeled cab. The steady improvement of the paving of the streets and the convenience of the omnibuses and cabs gradually weakened the old-established habit of using the boats of the Thames watermen in going from one part of the city to another, and the building of Waterloo and Southwark bridges and the construction of the Thames Tunnel completed the process. Before long the many stairways to the waterside fell into disuse and the watermen disappeared.

By 1840 railways had reached the suburbs of London, and before many years had passed most of the termini now existing had been built. Coaching days, with all their picturesqueness and the immense discomforts borne by travellers, extended into the Victorian age and the old galleried inns of the city flourished until nearly the middle of the century.

In the pages of Charles Dickens the life of Londoners in the forties is so vividly presented that there are few who have read the more important of his novels who are unable to recreate for themselves a picture of that comparatively quiet old city of the days when Queen Victoria was a bride. The age of stucco began about 1810. London's rapid expansion, due to the great financial recovery after the Napoleonic Wars, caused the construction over great areas of its perimeter of brick houses plastered to represent stone. About 1880 there began a movement in architecture which caused the abandonment of that form of stucco, and since then it has not dared to show its face again in new construction.

The mid-Victorian period witnessed the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament, which had been burnt in 1835. The Courts of Justice were only removed from Westminster to the site cleared for them near Temple Bar in 1882, and during the same reign a very large proportion of the public buildings familiar to the Londoners of to-day came into being. In the same period was the construction of a number of important thoroughfares, including Northumberland Avenue, the Embankments, Victoria Street, Cannon Street, Holborn Viaduct, Queen Victoria Street, New Oxford Street, and a large number of minor widenings and

alterations. In addition to all this making of streets, the Victorian period witnessed an enormous amount of reconstruction of houses in the City and West End. The monotonous brick frontages and the quaint little Georgian shops with bow-fronted windows filled with many small panes steadily disappeared, to be replaced often by architecture of a pretentious, if mediocre, style. Many of these Victorian structures were destined to be rebuilt after standing for a little more than half a century, but in spite of the ceaseless rebuilding London, as a whole, has contrived to preserve specimens of the domestic architecture of every period from Elizabethan times onwards. The public buildings and the churches which escaped the Great Fire and the iconoclasts include a most remarkable series of Norman and Gothic structures representing almost every phase of architecture. They are enumerated in the order of their age in the appendix.

The mayor and corporation of the city, as the county of London grew, began to find its ancient functions less and less onerous. With the rapid diminution of the night population, the old nucleus of London became increasingly a place of warehouses, offices, and banks, left, when the day's work was over, to the care of housekeepers and the enterprise of a very large breed of rat. On

this account the aldermen came to be regarded as portly men of wealth, whose chief function was the attendance at a certain number of banquets every year. This somewhat justifiable attitude of Outer London to the governing body of its historic centre has been changed since the devotion of the great Livery Companies in recent years to a very wise expenditure of their ample funds in the establishment of technical schools and many educational and charitable institutions of the greatest value to the city and the nation.

The organising of the police of the metropolis may be regarded as belonging to the Victorian age, for it was not until 1829 that Sir Robert Peel established a single police area under the control of the Home Secretary. The new force of police wore a blue uniform and tall hats, and became known variously as "Blue Devils," "Peelers," or "Bobbies." The special detective branch of the police was started in 1842, and thirty-six years later it developed into the C.I.D.

The amount of "waking up" that took place in London during this period was remarkable. To record the many improvements in the prisons, the markets, the primary schools, the drainage, the supply of pure water, and the removal of a thousand inconveniences and nuisances would take up a very large space. In the enthusiasm for improve-

ment that gave the impetus to reform, historic buildings were held of small account if a wider street were to be obtained by their removal, and in this way Temple Bar and many picturesque survivals were swept away.

One of the moving spirits in the development of British trade and manufacturing enterprise in the first half of the Victorian period was Prince Albert, to whose busy and original mind came the idea of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. Against angry opposition the scheme matured and came to fruition in 1851 as the result of his unwearying efforts. The success gained by the Exhibition was remarkable, and the surplus of £150,000 which it realised was devoted to the founding of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The stimulus to British trade as a result of the Prince Consort's effort was important, and he undoubtedly deserves the unceasing gratitude of all Londoners.

After the excitement caused by the Great Exhibition those subsequently held in London have been less memorable. The second half of the reign of Queen Victoria saw little in the way of remarkable events in the capital, apart from the ceremonial opening of new hospitals, museums, and other public buildings of consequence, until the jubilee of the reign in 1887, when on a bril-

liant June day London blazed into colour and a night of bonfires and illumination. A remarkable assemblage of representatives of all nations was present in London on this occasion, and ten years later, when Victoria the Good had completed sixty years of sovereignty, still greater evidences of enthusiasm and loyalty were demonstrated.

In 1899 came the Boer War and the raising in the City of a volunteer force known as the C.I.V. (City Imperial Volunteers) which served with distinction in South Africa and was welcomed home two years later in the streets of the city with an outburst of wild exuberance, but the aged Queen had already passed to her rest and the era which bears her name had closed under the shadow of an unfinished war.

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On a cold and gloomy day in January, 1901, Londoners thronged the streets to see the funeral cortège of the mighty Victoria, and among the mourners they looked with interest upon the martial figure of her grandson, the German Emperor. They did not anticipate that scarcely more than a dozen years would pass before that grey-cloaked and helmeted potentate would be among those mainly responsible for a world war, and that his aircraft would then scatter high explosives indiscriminately over their ancient city.

## HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF LONDON

### ROMAN :

Bastion of town wall in G.P.O. yard, Giltspur Street.

Bastion of town wall in Cripplegate Churchyard (medieval portion only visible).

Town wall from base to medieval parapet, Barber's Bonded Warehouse, Trinity Square, Tower Hill.

Portion of a house with hypocaust under floor, Coal Exchange, Lower Thames Street.

Bath in Strand Lane, approached from the Strand opposite St. Mary-le-Strand Church.

### ANGLO-SAXON :

Portions of the domestic buildings of Westminster Abbey.

### NORMAN :

The Keep of the Tower of London.

Crypt under St. Mary-le-Bow Church, Cheapside.

Pillars in the Church of All Hallows, Great Tower Street, Barking.

Church of St. Bartholomew-the-Great, Smithfield, eastern portion.

St. Saviour's Cathedral, Southwark, portions of north transept.

St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, crypt.

TRANSITIONAL NORMAN:

The Rotunda of the Temple Church.

EARLY ENGLISH:

The choir and transepts of Westminster Abbey.  
Nave arches of Church of All Hallows, Barking.

Portions of the Church of St. Helen, Bishopsgate.

Doorway and eastern end of nave of Church of St. Bartholomew-the-Great.

St. Saviour's Cathedral, Southwark, the greater part of the building, excluding nave.

Lambeth Palace Chapel.

Eastern portion of Temple Church.

Middle Tower Gateway of the Tower.

DECORATED:

Tower of Church of St. Alphege, London Wall.  
Church of St. Etheldreda, Ely Place, Holborn.  
Westminster Hall, St. Stephen's Chapel,  
Houses of Parliament.

Westminster Abbey, portion of nave and cloister.

Parts of St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate.



DECORATED (*continued*):

Parts of Church of Austin Friars,  
The Guildhall, the Great Hall and crypt.

PERPENDICULAR:

Hall of the Merchant Taylors' Company.  
St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate.  
St. Bartholomew-the-Great, Lady Chapel,  
cloister, and oriel window.  
Parts of Church of Austin Friars,  
Savoy Chapel.  
Church of St. Margaret, Westminster.  
Church of St. Olave, Hart Street.  
Westminster Abbey, Henry VII.'s Chapel,  
western bays of nave, parts of cloister.  
Crosby Hall, rebuilt on the embankment at  
Chelsea.  
Church of St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower.  
Gateway of St. John's Priory, Clerkenwell.

TUDOR:

St. James's Palace, gateway and other parts.  
Banqueting Hall, Whitehall Palace.  
Halls of the Middle Temple, Gray's Inn, and  
Lincoln's Inn.  
Staple Inn, Holborn.  
Gateways of Lincoln's Inn and Lambeth  
Palace.  
The Charterhouse (partly Jacobean).

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RESTORATION TO QUEEN ANNE:

St. Paul's Cathedral and all the Wren Churches.

Halls of the Skinners' and Mercers' Companies.

Towers of Westminster Abbey.

St. John's Church, Westminster.

The Monument to the Great Fire.

George Hotel, 73, Borough High Street, (gal-  
leried inn).

GEORGIAN:

Halls of some of the Livery Companies, Water-  
loo Bridge.

South façade of Guildhall.

The British Museum.

Church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

Guy's Hospital.

The Royal Mint.

The Custom House. (Façade, 1852.)

The Bank of England. Architects, Sir John  
Soane and Sir Robert Taylor.

The Mansion House. Architect, George Dance.

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